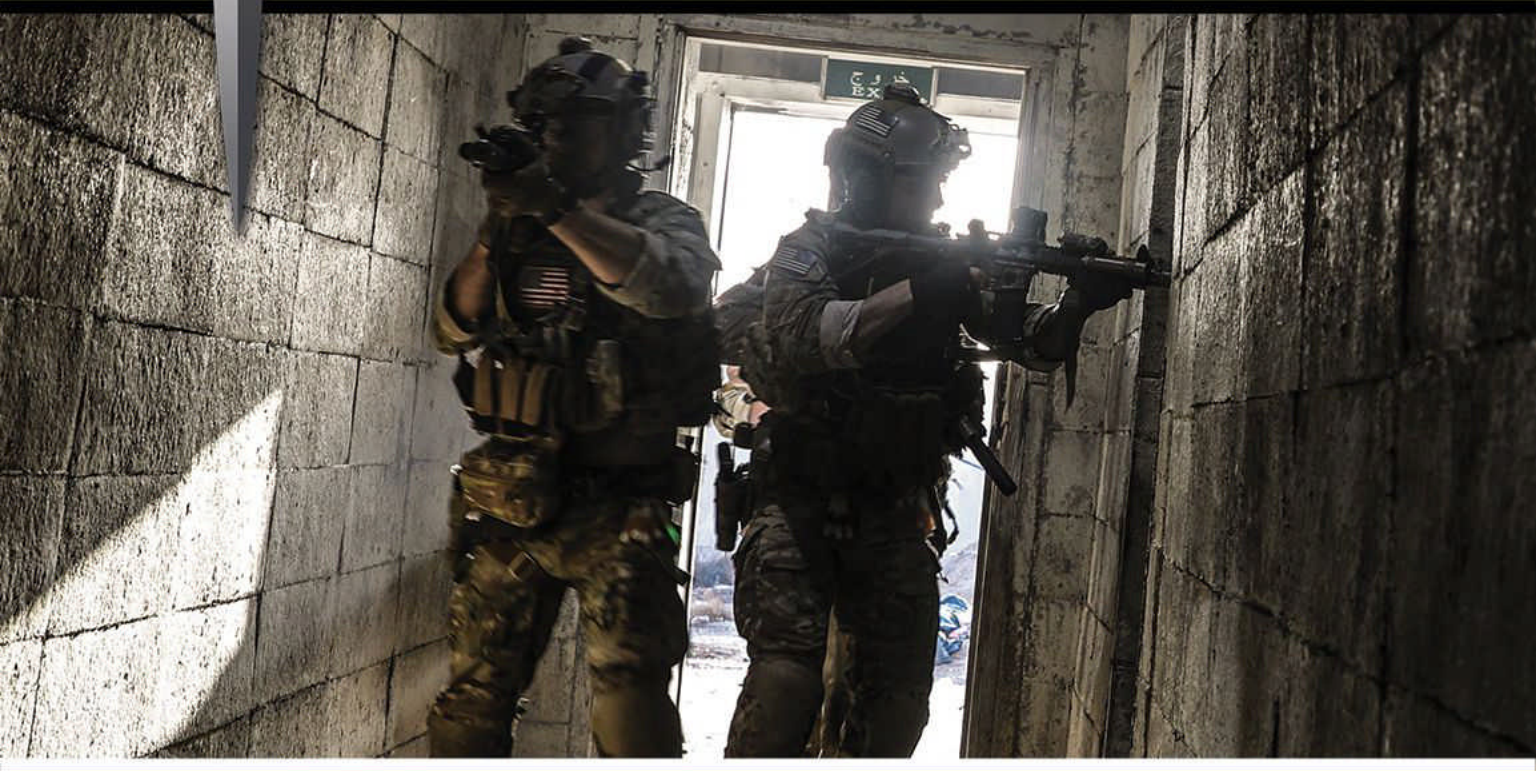
SPECIAL TACTICS

# HIGH-INTENSITY

# MILITARY URBAN COMBAT



## CLOSE QUARTERS BATTLE AND STREET COMBAT IN CONVENTIONAL URBAN WAR

DEVELOPED BY SPECIAL OPERATIONS & INFANTRY VETERANS

# HIGH-INTENSITY

# MILITARY URBAN COMBAT

## CLOSE QUARTERS BATTLE AND STREET COMBAT IN CONVENTIONAL URBAN WAR

SPECIAL TACTICS™

Special Tactics, LLC

Special Tactics and the Special Tactics Logo are registered trademarks of Special Tactics, LLC

© 2022 by Special Tactics, LLC

ISBN 979-8-9855950-2-4

Except as permitted under U.S. Copyright Law, no part of this book may be reprinted, reproduced, transmitted, or utilized in any form by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying, microfilming, and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without written permission from Special Tactics, LLC.

# Table of Contents

**COURSE OVERVIEW: HIGH-INTENSITY CONVENTIONAL URBAN WAR ..... 6**

Low-Intensity vs. High-Intensity War ..... 6
About this Manual ..... 7

**INTRODUCTION: THE FOUR PILLARS OF SURVIVAL ..... 9**

Proper Mindset ..... 9
Situational Awareness ..... 9
Skill Proficiency ..... 10
Physical Fitness ..... 10

**CLOSE QUARTERS BATTLE: CONCEPTS AND FUNDAMENTALS ..... 11**

The Three Principles of Close Quarters Battle ..... 11
Immediate vs. Delayed Entry ..... 12
Deliberate Clearing vs. Emergency Clearing ..... 12
Technique Combinations, TTP/SOP Development and Training ..... 13

**UNIT STRUCTURE: ORGANIZING FOR URBAN COMBAT ..... 14**

## BASIC URBAN COMBAT

**INITIAL ENTRY AND TACTICAL STACK ..... 20**

*Tight Stack on an Open Door ..... 21*
*Tight Stack on a Closed Door ..... 31*
*Loose Stack ..... 35*

**IMMEDIATE ENTRY ..... 37**

*Center-Fed Room ..... 38*
*Corner-Fed Room ..... 52*
*Hallway Movement ..... 60*

**DELAYED ENTRY ..... 62**

# HIGH-INTENSITY URBAN COMBAT

**EXTERIOR MOVEMENT ..... 71**

*Moving Down Streets ..... 72*
*Crossing Alleys or Narrow Streets ..... 74*
*Crossing Wide Streets ..... 77*
*Crossing Windows ..... 80*

**MACHINE GUNS AND GRENADES ..... 84**

*Fragmentation Grenade Employment ..... 85*
*Supressive Fire Through Walls ..... 89*
*Clearing Adjacent Rooms by Fire ..... 93*
*Throwing Grenades Through Walls ..... 97*
*Mouse-Holing Through Walls ..... 101*
*Grenades and Machine Guns in Hallways ..... 105*

**SPECIAL TERRAIN CONSIDERATIONS ..... 107**

*Large Holes in the Floor or Ceiling ..... 108*
*Destroyed or Crumbling Walls ..... 112*
*Debris, Barricades and Boobytraps ..... 113*
*Grenades in Stairwells ..... 115*
*Tunnels, Pipes and Sewers ..... 116*
*Underground Compartments ..... 119*

**DEFENSE FUNDAMENTALS ..... 123**

*Hasty Defense ..... 124*
*Deliberate Defense ..... 125*
*Using Vehicles for Cover ..... 126*

**CASUALTY EVACUATION AND CARRY ..... 127**

*Evacuating a Casualty Under Fire ..... 128*
*Sniper Casualty Rescue ..... 131*
*Casualty Carry Techniques ..... 133*

**FURTHER TRAINING COURSES AND RESOURCES ..... 135**

*To those who have gone before us, the living and the fallen*

# COURSE OVERVIEW
# High-Intensity Conventional Urban War

This manual is an abridged version of the longer *Squad-Level Military Urban Combat* manual published by Special Tactics in 2017 which required controlled distribution and could not be published digitally because it contained sensitive but unclassified information regarding U.S. military urban warfare tactics. This version has extracted two sections from the original manual that contain no sensitive information, making this abridged version suitable for international, digital distribution.

The first section on basic urban combat essentially provides a superior presentation of materials that can be found in open-source military manuals. Since Special Tactics was only able to include topics covered in existing government publications, this section leaves out several subjects covered in the unabridged version. However, this section will still provide a valuable baseline of urban warfare tactics similar to what is currently taught by U.S. military schools.

The second section provides the core value of this new manual, focusing on the often neglected subject of high-intensity conventional warfare. Almost all of current U.S. military and special operations doctrine focuses on precision Close Quarters Battle (CQB) tactics that trace their origins to special operations hostage rescue units. There is a notable gap in tactics focused on how to fight a near-peer adversary on a conventional battlefield. Such tactics and knowledge could prove particularly useful for allied military forces as conventional conflicts grow more common around the world.

## Low-Intensity vs. High-Intensity War

After September 11, 2001, the U.S. and its allies found themselves embroiled in numerous low-intensity conflicts. Based on operational imperatives to minimize civilian casualties, many urban warfare tactics that evolved during this period focused on precision and target discrimination. However, in the event of a conventional war, urban combat may evolve in several key ways.

In a high-intensity urban fight, it is likely that civilians will either have evacuated, or will be trying to stay out of the way. Even if civilians remain on the battlefield, accidental civilian deaths may be accepted as a tragic inevitability of high-intensity war. As a result, commanders will have much more freedom in their use of heavy weapons and firepower.

When facing a heavily armed enemy, the task of clearing a room or building becomes much more dangerous. A company-sized element might clear a building, only to die in a massive explosion as the enemy detonates pre-positioned demolition charges. In some cases, units will want to avoid going into a room or building at all and instead use firepower to neutralize threats from a distance.

The employment of artillery and explosives will change the urban landscape. Buildings may be damaged, unstable, on fire, or filled with smoke. When buildings are completely destroyed, the tangled mass of rubble can provide even more defensible positions. Military units might benefit from talking with firefighters about how to move and operate in heavily damaged buildings.

Sewers and subway tunnels will become much more important in conventional urban warfare since they offer hidden routes to move around the city without being exposed to direct fire and artillery. However, these narrow passages can also become deathtraps if the enemy clears them using explosives or flamethrowers.

Casualties in an urban fight are typically very high. Also, the next high-intensity urban fight will probably be the first one where combatants on both sides will wear modern body armor. This will save lives but may also mean a much higher percentage of casualties will be wounded (WIA) as opposed to killed (KIA). A large number of WIA presents a far more difficult logistical challenge for evacuation than an equal number of KIA, a critical factor that must be planned for early.

## About this Manual

This manual provides common sense ideas, tactics, techniques and procedures to help military units increase their survivability and effectiveness in urban warfare. While organization, weapons and doctrine vary between services, this book aims to provide flexible principles than can be useful to any force in a wide variety of tactical situations.

All of the TTPs (Tactics, Techniques and Procedures) in this manual are battle-tested and are the product of many decades of lessons learned in combat operations. Therefore, the reader can rest assured that everything in this manual is based on sound tactical principles and common sense. However, that does not mean every reader will agree with the information presented in this manual.

Combat leaders are the best judge of their own unit's threat environment and requirements. Units should develop their own TTPs, customized for their own particular needs. The goal of this manual is to support this process by providing a wide selection of options to choose from. Some organizations might accept and adopt all the techniques in this manual. Other organizations might choose to adopt some techniques and not others. Either way, the

manual is best used as a reference or guide to help combat units develop and refine their own TTPs for Military Operations in an Urban Environment (MOUT).

The manual may also spark new ideas, challenge assumptions or encourage discussion on tactical themes. Regardless of who "wins" a tactical argument, the process of open-mindedly discussing, questioning and challenging tactical concepts is always beneficial. If this book can encourage this sort of thinking, questioning and discussion, it will have a very positive impact on readiness and tactical performance across the military community.

# INTRODUCTION
# The Four Pillars of Survival

The "four pillars" of survival are proper mindset, situational awareness, skill proficiency and physical fitness. These pillars form the basis for success in all combat situations. This manual is intended not only to teach specific techniques, but rather to increase the reader's actual chances of survival and success in a real-life combat situation. An expert marksman who is not mentally prepared for the stress of combat and not ready to employ lethal force can lose to an untrained adversary. Lack of situational awareness, even for a moment, can cause an experienced fighter to fall victim to unskilled enemies. Therefore, any combat training program must rest on the following four pillars.

## Proper Mindset

Proper mindset is the most critical of the four pillars. In the simplest terms, people with the proper mindset devote significant time and energy to preparing for combat and training for the worst-case scenario. Many people will learn to shoot a pistol or study a martial art, but their skills decline quickly because they fail to practice frequently enough. Having the proper mindset means being tough, determined, never cutting corners, and taking every precaution to ensure survival. In a combat situation, having the proper mindset means being prepared to employ lethal force without hesitation and never quitting during the fight regardless of fear or pain. The training suggestions in this manual will help you develop the proper mindset.

## Situational Awareness

Lack of situational awareness is one of the leading causes of failure or death in combat situations. In modern society, most people's situational awareness is very low. They generally spend their

day wrapped up in their own thoughts and problems and pay little attention to what is going on around them. People who live in relatively secure environments fall into even deeper levels of complacency and unpreparedness. The mentality of, "it can't happen to me," can ultimately prove to be disastrously wrong. Most victims of crime, terrorism and other deadly attacks lived their lives thinking, "it can't happen to me."

People with the proper mindset understand the importance of situational awareness and make disciplined efforts to cultivate it. Situational awareness begins with awareness of the threat and awareness that bad things can happen to anyone. Situational awareness involves trying to remain alert at all times without being paranoid. In a combat environment, situational awareness includes conducting detailed area studies prior to deployment, following trends in enemy tactics, and studying current intelligence reports. The best way to improve your situational awareness is to make a conscious effort to continually cultivate and improve it.

## Skill Proficiency

Once you have the proper mindset and maintain good situational awareness, the next step is to ensure you have the proper skills or "tools" to protect yourself in a combat situation. When striving to improve skill proficiency it is important to choose the best skills and techniques that are simple, effective, easy to perform and can realistically apply to a real-life scenario. Then you must practice these techniques repeatedly until they become second nature. This will maximize the chances that you will respond immediately in a high-stress situation. The central focus of this manual is to help you build skill proficiency.

## Physical Fitness

Fitness is a critical but often overlooked factor that affects your chances of survival in a combat situation. Even skilled fighters with the proper mindset and high levels of situational awareness can lose a fight simply because they run out of energy. In order to maintain adequate levels of combat fitness, you do not need to achieve the same fitness level as a professional or Olympic athlete. Rather, the key is merely to stay healthy, maintain a decent level of cardiovascular endurance, running speed, functional strength, and coordination. Popular commercial fitness programs don't always focus on the most useful abilities needed for combat. For example, many people jog but how many also run sprints to build speed? Simply being able to run fast without falling is one of the most critical survival skills in a gunfight or emergency situation, yet most people rarely practice sprinting. For those interested in combat fitness, Special Tactics provides a range of books and courses on the subject.

# CLOSE QUARTERS BATTLE
# Concepts and Fundamentals

The four pillars of proper mindset, situational awareness, skill proficiency and physical fitness establish the foundation for success in any tactical engagement. Building upon that foundation, there are critical concepts and fundamentals that apply specifically to close quarters battle (CQB). First, there are the three principles of CQB: surprise, speed and violence of action. There are also different categories of entry techniques: immediate and delayed. Finally, there are two different types of clearing techniques: deliberate and emergency.

## The Three Principles of Close Quarters Battle

The three principles of surprise, speed and violence of action are critical for success and apply to all types of urban operations and close quarters engagements. Even if teams choose to slow down, operate more cautiously or establish a more defensive posture in specific situations, the principles still apply. For example, the principle of speed does not dictate that team members always move as fast as they can, only fast enough to maintain the initiative and minimize exposure.

### *Surprise*

Surprise is a critical element for successful tactical entry and can be achieved through rapid execution, deception, and shock. When entering a building or room, teams should use the element of surprise to instill maximum fear and confusion in the mind of the enemy. Surprise is particularly important for the initial phase of the entry process because it helps the team gain the initiative in the first critical seconds of the operation and overwhelm the enemy before he has a chance to respond.

### *Speed*

Speed helps the team capture and maintain the initiative by outpacing the enemy. Still, the principle of speed does not dictate that team members always move as fast as they can. If team members move too fast and operate in a reckless manner, catastrophic failure can result. Moving quickly in a controlled manner (sometimes referred to as "careful hurry") will often prove most effective in a high-stress situation. Team members only need to move fast enough to outpace the enemy, maintain the initiative, minimize exposure and avoid becoming bogged down.

### *Violence of Action*

Violence of action means overwhelming the enemy with the maximum level of shock, while still maintaining control of the situation. Many enemies that teams may confront are extremely committed, violent and aggressive. This is particularly the case with terrorists and extremists. The enemy will often not be intimidated by military forces. Enemies probably will not care whether an assault team is highly trained, well-armed or part of an elite tactical unit. The enemy will attack ruthlessly and aggressively and therefore a high level of aggressive action may be required to overwhelm and subdue the enemy. However, violence of action still must be applied in a controlled, methodical manner. Teams should only use the level of force necessary to resolve the situation and must make every effort to avoid harming innocent civilians.

## Immediate vs. Delayed Entry

CQB entry techniques can be divided into "immediate entry" and "delayed entry." Immediate entry methods call for offensive, aggressive movement and were developed by military special operations forces for hostage rescue situations. Immediate entry calls for using surprise and speed to enter and penetrate the room immediately without taking the time to first evaluate the room from the outside. While sometimes necessary, immediate entry is generally more dangerous than delayed entry.

Delayed entry techniques are designed to minimize a team member's exposure and maximize the benefits of cover and concealment. Delayed entry tactics call for clearing as much of a room or hallway as possible from the outside, before actually making entry. Delayed entry tactics are a good option for situations where time is on the team's side and there is no need to move in quickly. Delayed entry can also be useful in situations where the team expects booby traps or an ambush.

## Deliberate Clearing vs. Emergency Clearing

CQB clearing techniques can also be divided into "deliberate" clearing and "emergency" clearing. The difference has less to do with speed and more to do with the level of care and attention applied to the clearing process. It is possible to execute deliberate tactics very quickly, as long as

the team is careful to clear each room and danger area completely. Essentially, when conducting a deliberate clear, the team will not take any shortcuts.

Emergency tactics are the opposite of deliberate tactics. In an emergency situation, the team may need to take shortcuts and not clear every room or danger area completely. This increases the level of risk. However, in an emergency situation where time is critical or there is imminent danger to innocent people, the team might choose to assume a greater level of risk.

## Technique Combinations, TTP/SOP Development and Training

Teams do not have to choose only one of the techniques just described. Rather, teams can employ the techniques in various combinations to fit the needs of the unique situation. A team might move into a building cautiously at first, using delayed entry and deliberate clearing techniques. If the team discovers hostages in the building they might rapidly shift to using immediate entry and emergency clearing techniques.

Individual units and tactical teams should also develop unique TTPs (Tactics, Techniques and Procedures) and SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) that fit the particular preferences and needs of the organization. This manual is only a reference for providing suggestions and ideas. Ultimately, each unit or organization should establish its own, customized TTPs and SOPs and collect them in a binder. That binder should be continually updated and evaluated over time to reflect lessons learned in the field and in training. Techniques should emphasize safety, control and team integrity while attempting to achieve manpower and firepower superiority in each engagement.

It is also critical to practice techniques frequently under realistic conditions. If sophisticated training facilities are not available, teams can still create realistic scenarios using marked-ground training (engineer tape tied to stakes in the ground to depict room configurations) or even tabletop exercises. Teams must remain highly disciplined and adhere rigidly to an effective training regimen. Team members must also spend as much time at the range as possible to hone their weapons skills and marksmanship.

# UNIT STRUCTURE
# Organizing for Urban Combat

The unit structure and organization of most military forces is geared primarily for rural warfare. In order to optimize performance in urban combat, either conventional or unconventional, it can be helpful to reorganize squads and platoons in several ways. However, whenever modifying an existing unit structure or doctrine, it is always best to make the changes as minimal as possible to ensure they do not end up being counterproductive or do not take away from a unit's flexibility.

The most important difference between rural unit structure and urban unit structure is the positioning of small-unit leaders on the battlefield. In rural operations, it can be helpful for small-unit leaders to be detached from their subordinate units. The leader is then able to move around the battlefield freely to communicate with different subordinate units, observe the battlefield from different angles and control movement or fires. At the squad level, this means that a squad leader will not be attached to any of his/her subordinate teams, but instead will be able to move freely between teams and attach to whichever one requires guidance at a given moment.

However, having a detached leader in urban combat can be confusing and hazardous. A single individual floating between assault teams and running back and forth into different rooms runs the risk of being shot by his/her subordinates. Second, as will be explained later, having a central leader controlling two or three teams in a building is actually more confusing than letting teams communicate directly with one another.

Another important factor in urban unit structure is the changed role of machine guns. In rural combat, it is often best to get machine guns into the fight quickly, in order to achieve the highest volume of fire on the enemy in the shortest possible time. Therefore, in rural combat, machine guns are typically placed near the front of the formation and should be some of the first weapons to deploy and engage.

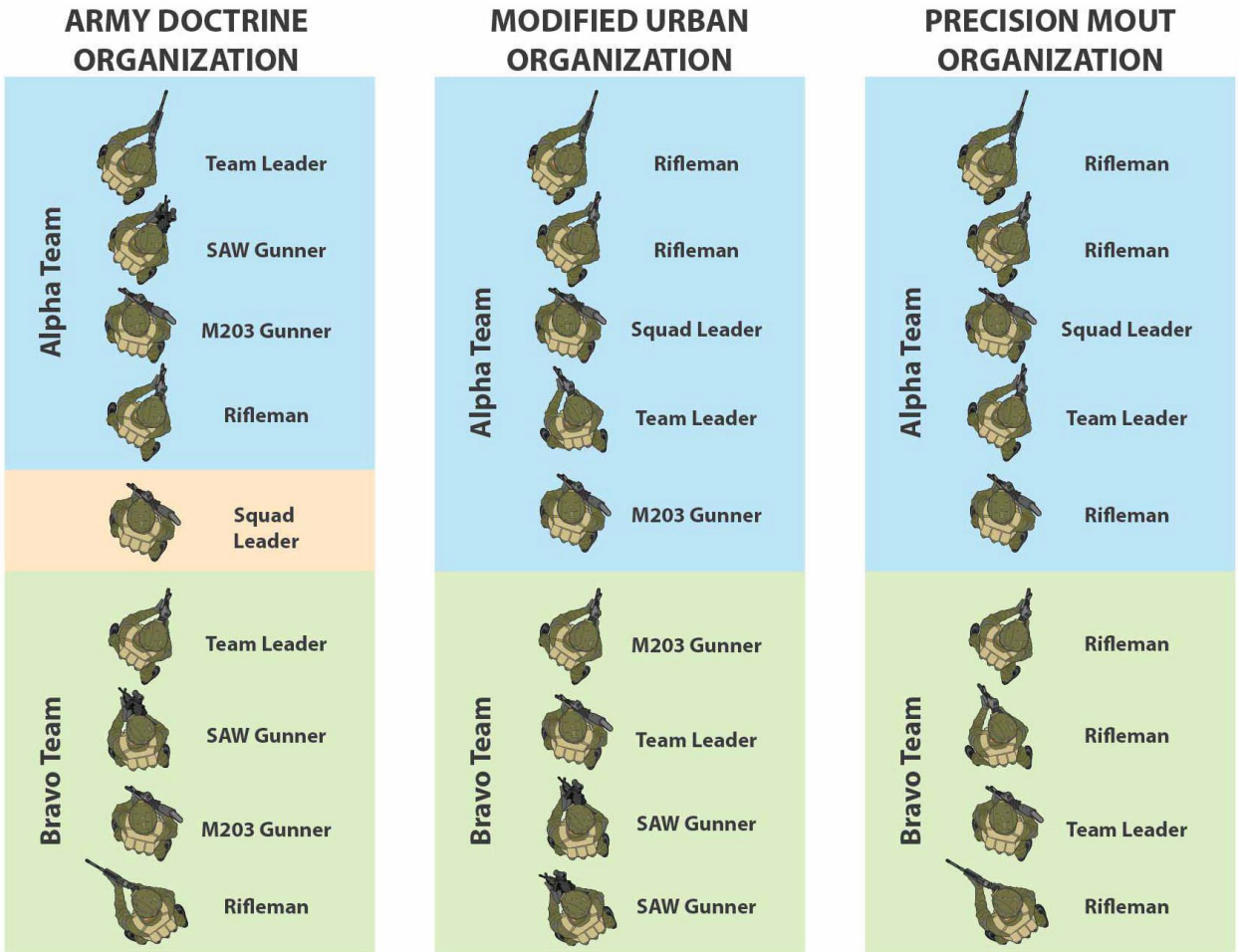
In room and building clearing, machine guns usually prove too unwieldy to be effective and are thus the last weapons to come into the room. Ideally, it is often best not to use machine guns for room clearing at all but instead keep them in detached weapons sections

that can be used to establish hasty defensive positions or fire out of windows to engage longer-range targets in the street. Given these considerations, it can be useful to reorganize the squad to get the larger, bulkier weapons out of the close quarters fight and save them for the longer range engagements they are suited for.

# SQUAD URBAN COMBAT ORGANIZATION

## US Army Squad Configuration Options

U.S. Army doctrine breaks the infantry squad into two fire teams and a separate squad leader. To modify the existing squad for urban operations, it can be useful to eliminate the independent squad leader and attach the squad leader permanently to alpha team. The alpha team leader will become the second in command or "2IC" of alpha team. The squad leader will still technically remain in control of both teams, but in combat he/she will focus on controlling alpha team. It can also be helpful to move both SAW gunners to bravo team, leaving alpha as a dedicated assaulter or room clearing element while bravo provides enhanced firepower for holding and defending captured ground. However, all of these organizational modifications are just suggestions. In some cases, leaders will want to retain the existing doctrinal organization or develop another structure that fits their particular unit preferences and operational demands.

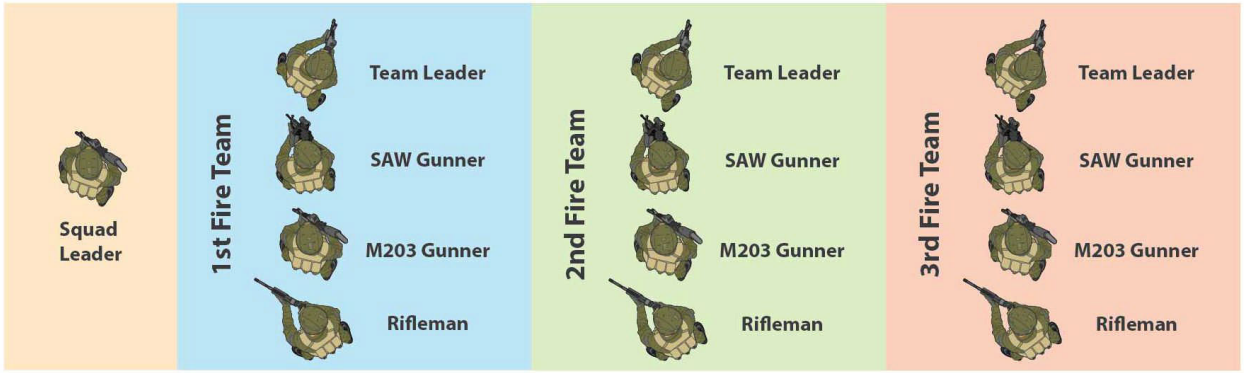


# SQUAD URBAN COMBAT ORGANIZATION

## USMC Squad Configuration Options

U.S. Marine Corps doctrine breaks the rifle squad into three fire teams and a separate squad leader. As with the Army squad, it can be useful to eliminate the independent squad leader and attach the squad leader permanently to alpha team. The alpha team leader will become the second in command or "2IC" of alpha team. The squad leader will still technically remain in control of all teams, but in combat he/she will focus on controlling alpha team. It may also be useful to move all three SAW gunners into a single support element that the squad leader can use to establish hasty defensive positions or fire out of windows to engage longer-range targets in the street. Once again, all of these organizational modifications are just suggestions. In some cases leaders will want to retain the existing, doctrinal organization or develop another structure that fits their particular unit preferences and operational demands.

**US MARINE CORPS DOCTRINE ORGANIZATION**

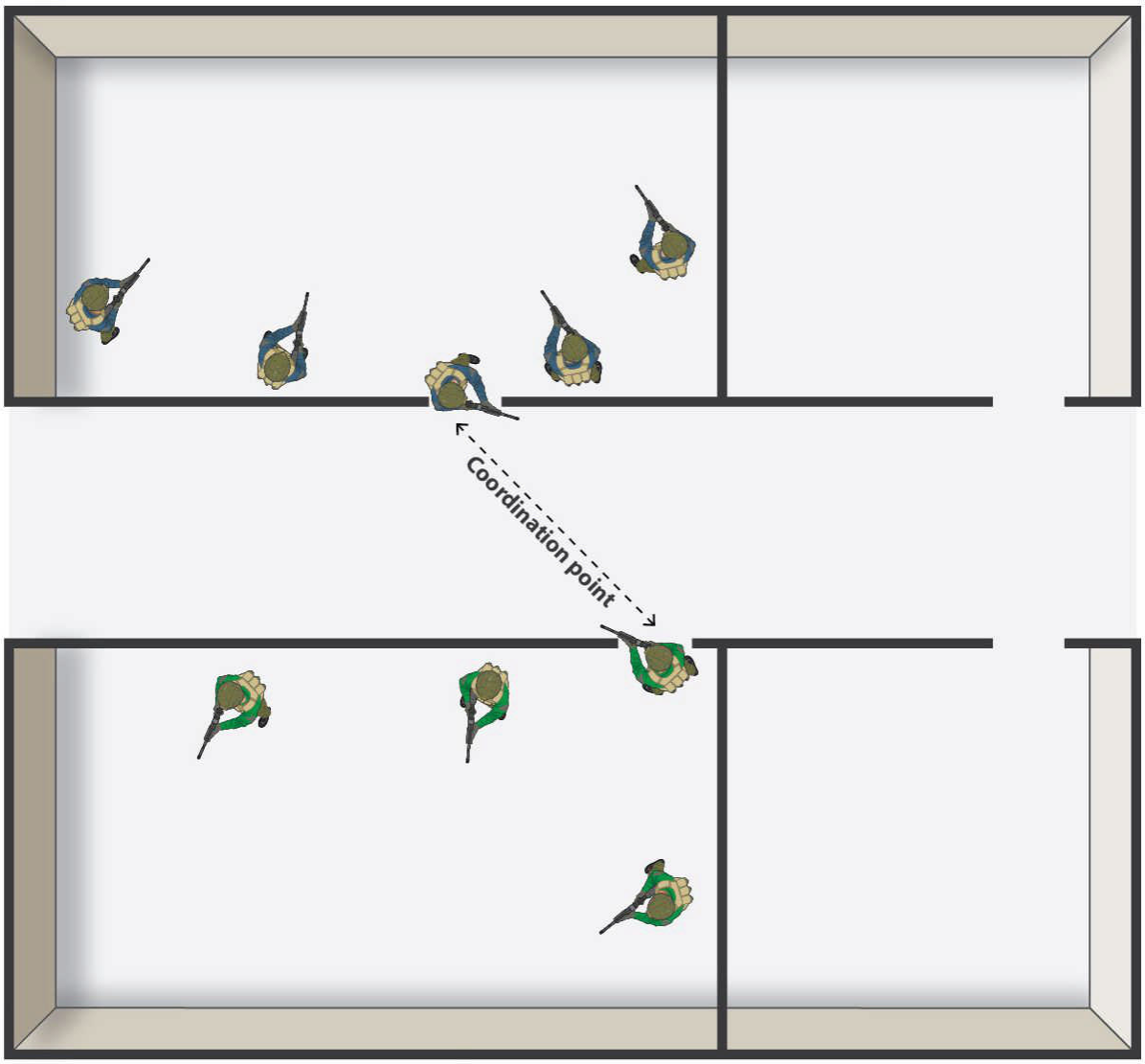



**MODIFIED URBAN ORGANIZATION**

# COORDINATION POINT BETWEEN TEAMS

## Reason for Eliminating Independent Squad Leaders

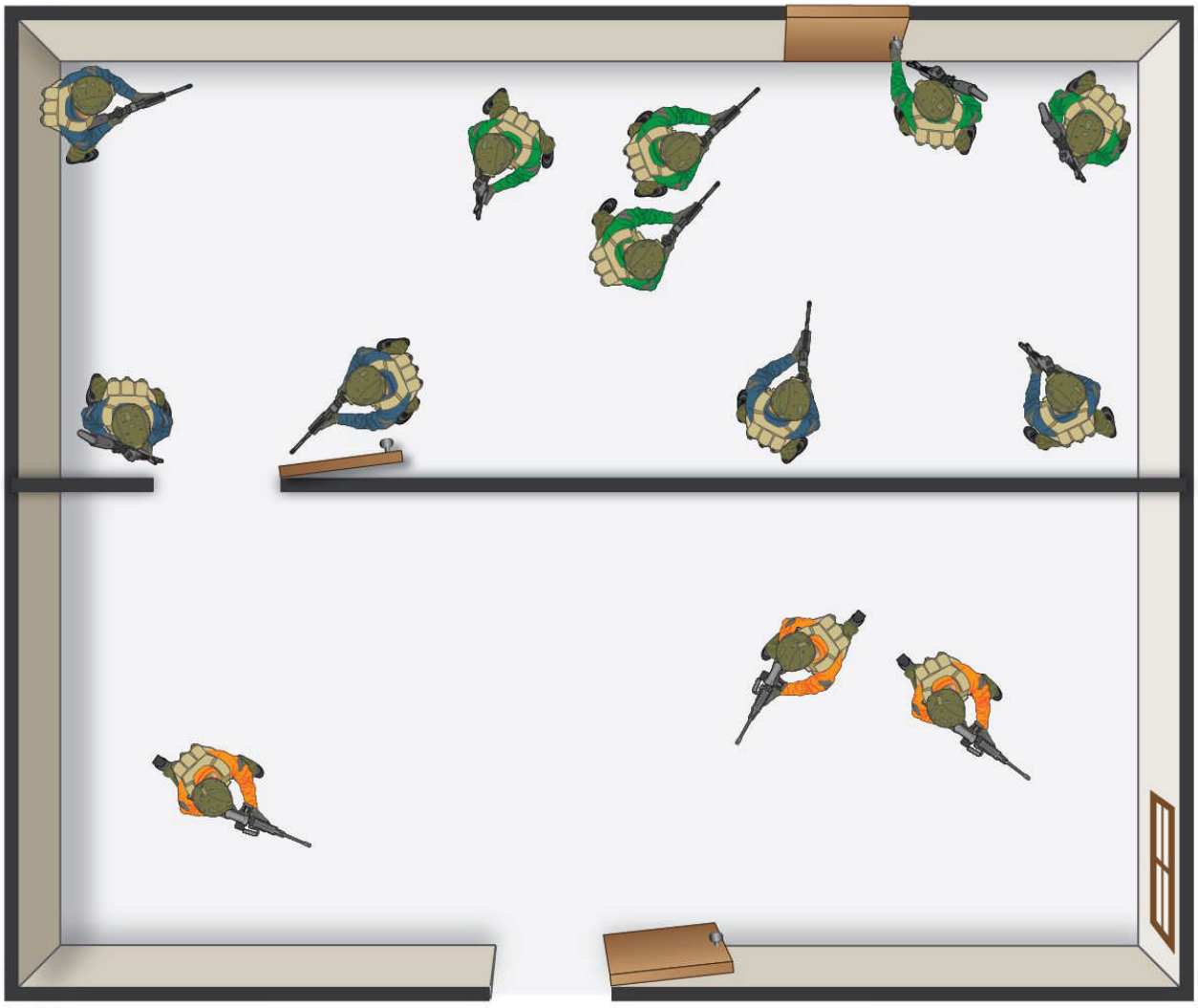
When moving from room to room or down hallways, teams communicate with each other by establishing a "coordination point." The leader of each team will position close to the entry door and establish eye contact with the leader of the other team. The two leaders can then use verbal commands or hand signals to communicate what they see in their respective rooms and decide which way to move next. Having an independent squad leader floating between two teams can make the communications process more complicated by adding an additional layer of command. By having only one leader of each team, that leader always knows to man the coordination point and can communicate directly with other teams.



# EMPLOYMENT OF MACHINE GUN SECTIONS

## Doors, Windows and Long-Range Targets

While machine guns are generally less useful in close quarters battle and room clearing, they can be grouped together in special sections that can provide the squad leader with a large amount of firepower to cover doors, windows and engage long-range targets in the street. It is possible to configure both U.S. Army and USMC squads and platoons to form machine gun support sections for urban combat, using both light and medium machine guns. While it is possible to have an actual team leader from the squad control the machine gun section, it is not as necessary since the machine guns will follow as a trail element and will be employed as needed by the squad leader. The senior gunner can assume the role as acting leader for the machine gun section when necessary.



# BASIC URBAN COMBAT
# Initial Entry and Tactical Stack

The first thing a tactical team must do is "stack" at the initial entry point. There are two types of stack configurations, tight stack (closed stack) and loose stack (dispersed stack). Employing a tight stack makes team members more vulnerable but can sometimes be necessary for ensuring quick entry into a room, particularly when operating with a team that has had little time to practice together.

The loose stack is generally the preferred technique since it greatly reduces the team's vulnerability to hostile fire, particularly automatic fire. However, if a tactical team does not practice entering a room using the loose stack there is a possibility that there will be dangerous gaps between team members as they enter, which could leave team members' backs exposed. Still, even if a team chooses to use the tight stack, it is important to maintain some spacing between team members to reduce vulnerability

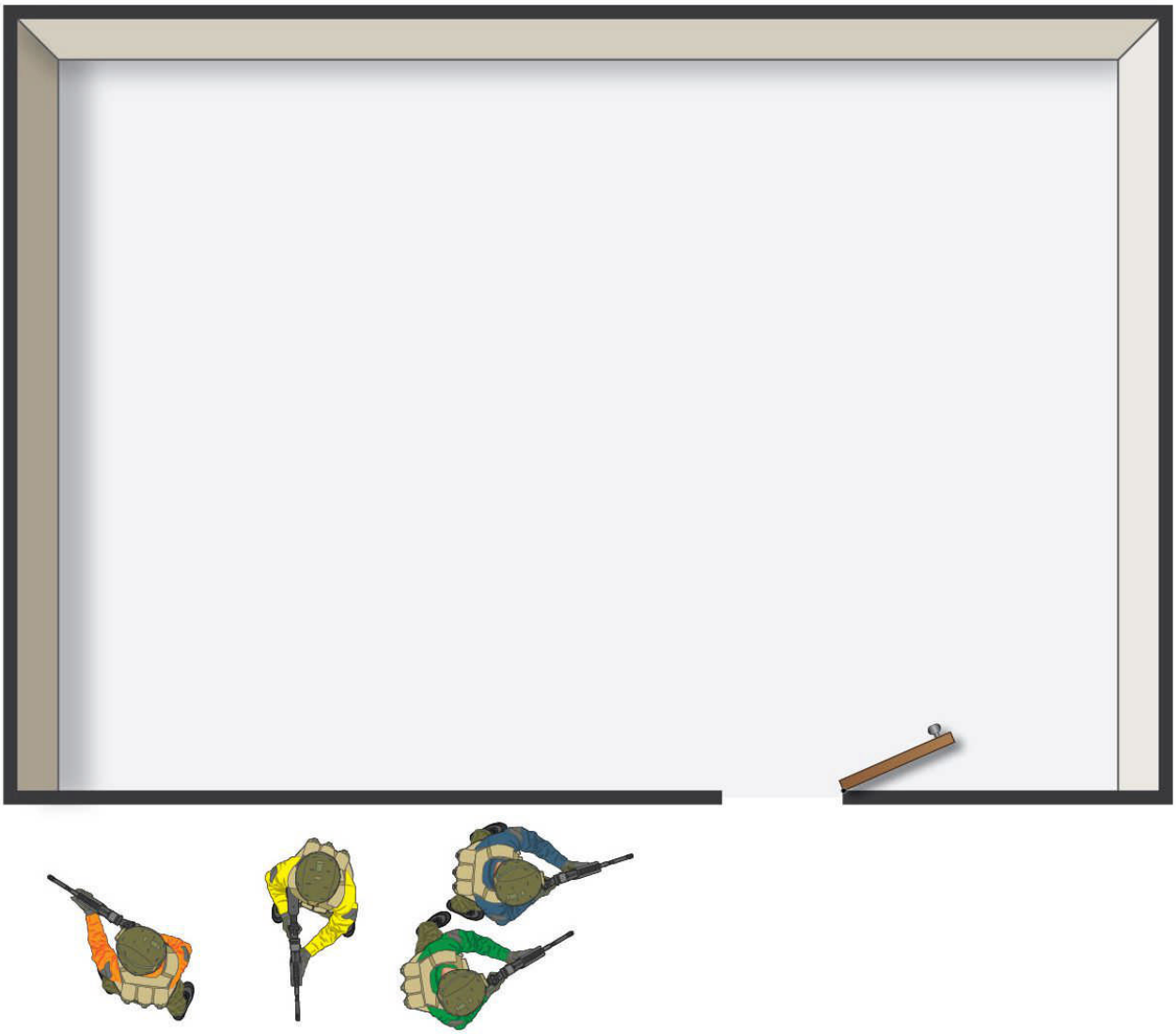
Some teams may choose to execute a "ready signal" prior to entering a room. Teams that have not spent as much time working together might choose to use a more deliberate signal for greater control. More experienced teams might use simpler signals or even no signal at all. Highly experienced teams can flow from room to room quickly and aggressively with minimal need for communication. However, there are times when even the most experienced teams will revert back to using a ready signal to maintain control and team integrity in a high-stress situation.

Whether a door is opened or closed can change the configuration of team members in the stack. In most cases, when faced with a closed door, one team member should move across to the opposite side of the door to act as the breacher. For exterior doors and locked doors a dedicated breacher may be needed. The breacher may have specialized training and breaching tools such as a shotgun or explosive charges. In other cases, if a door is not locked, any team member can act as the breacher to speed the team's entry into the next room without having to bring the breacher all the way up from the rear.

# TIGHT STACK ON AN OPEN DOOR

## Occupying the Initial Entry Point

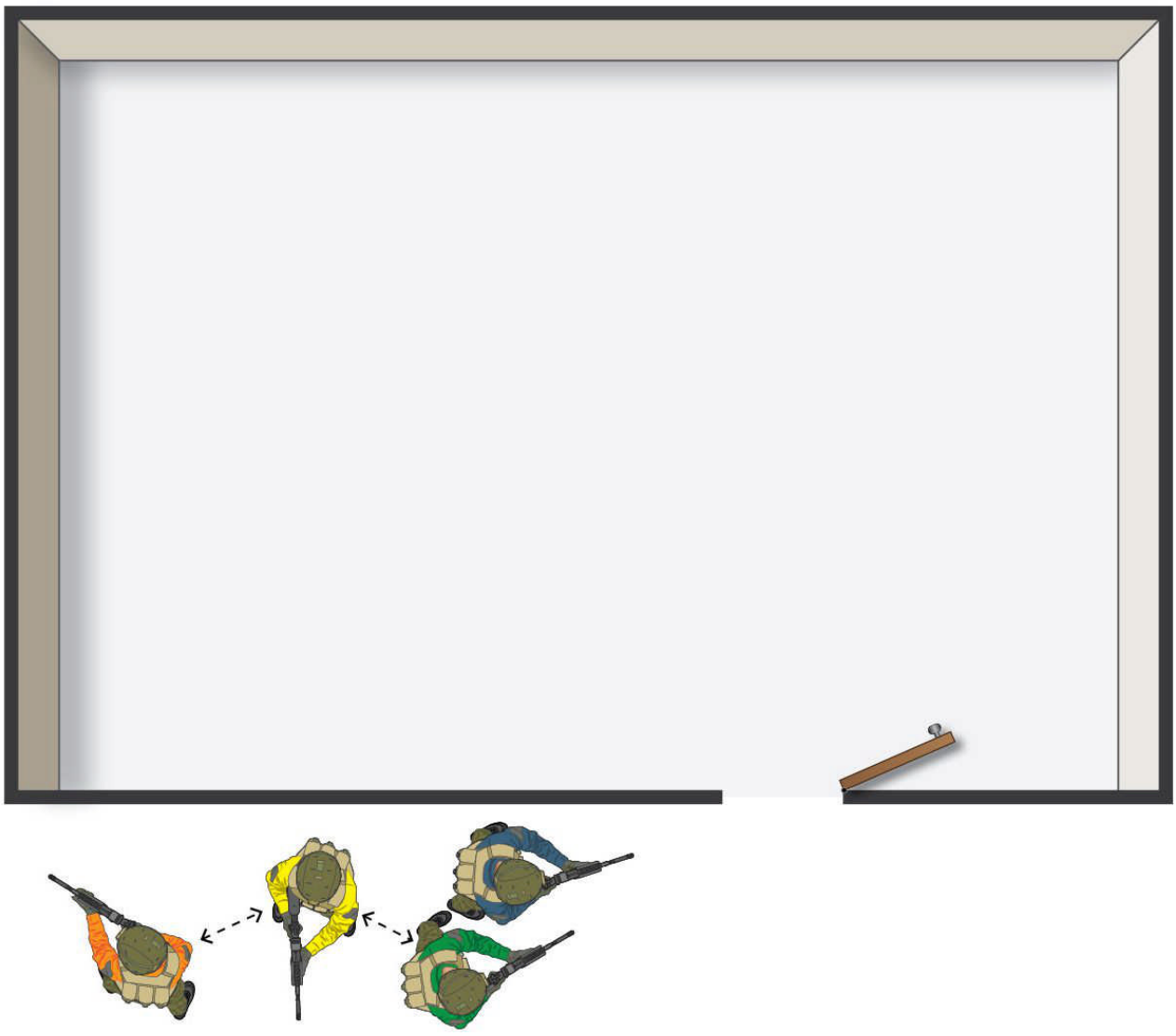
The team must remain as quiet as possible to avoid compromise when occupying the initial entry point. Avoiding detection allows the team to maintain the element of surprise and gives the team members time to assess the situation before making entry. The team must also maintain communication and coordinate effectively with any command and control elements. This will help team members maintain the pace of operations, retain the initiative and expedite searches while minimizing the chances of civilian casualties or friendly fire. **NOTE: Color coded shirts, arrows and scan arcs are designed to help the reader keep track of different team members.**



# TIGHT STACK ON AN OPEN DOOR

## Maintaining Correct Spacing

For the tight stack technique, team members should remain close to each other to facilitate control and allow fast and fluid movement into the room. However, team members should still try to maintain some degree of spacing since a tightly packed formation is an easy target for one burst of automatic fire. Also, if team members are so close together that they are in physical contact, there is the chance that they will snag on each other's gear or trip over each other in a high-stress situation.



# TIGHT STACK ON AN OPEN DOOR

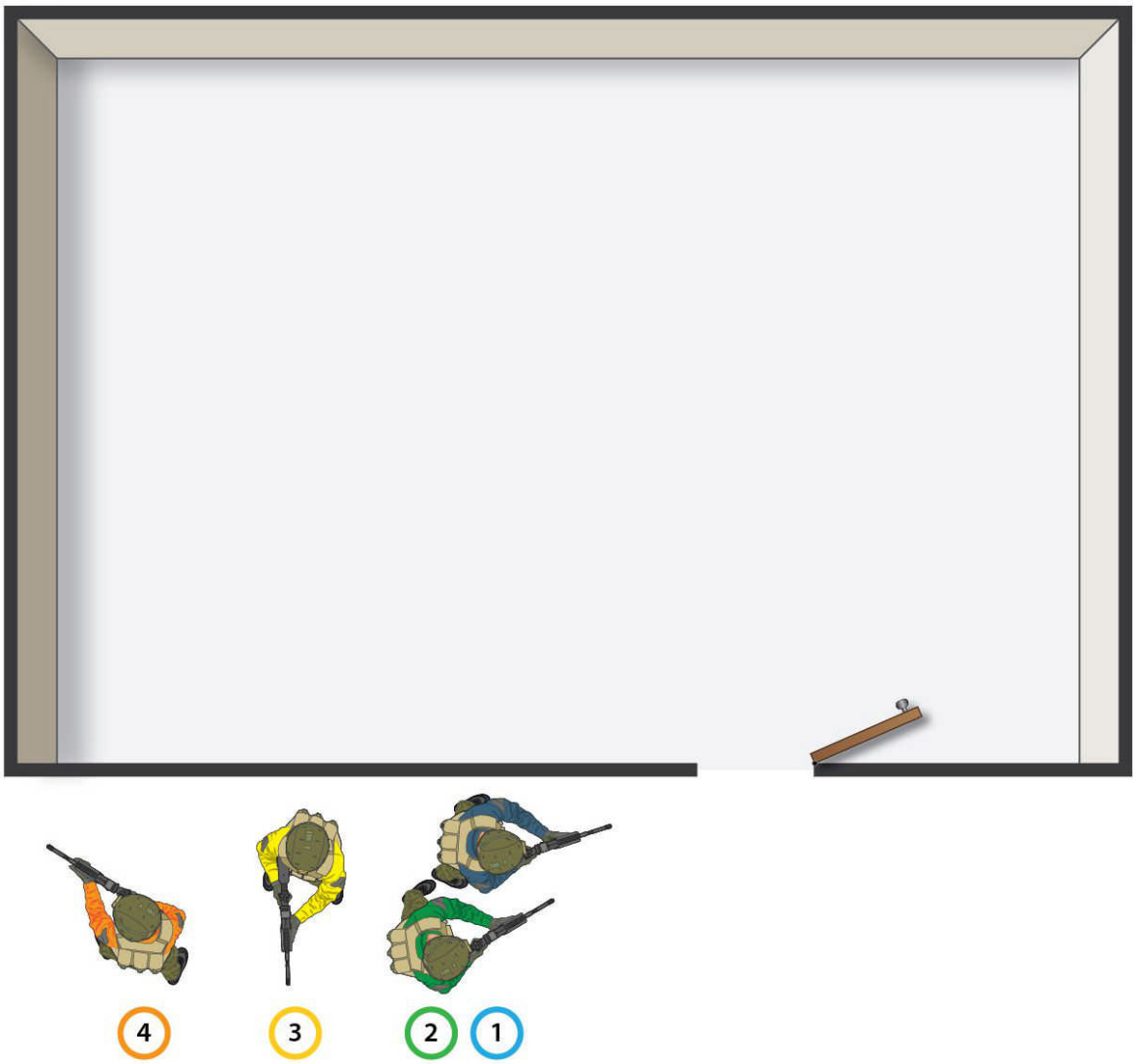
## Options for Ready Signals

To ensure the team is ready, it is useful to employ a hand signal. There are several possible signal options. The most deliberate is the "thumb-back, squeeze forward." For this option the second team member in the stack extends a thumb back over the shoulder. The next team member in the stack squeezes the thumb and then extends his/her thumb back to repeat the process until the signal reaches the last team member in the stack. At this point, the last team member will pass a firm squeeze forward. Each team member will pass the squeeze forward until it reaches the first team member. At this point the team is ready for entry. When conducting the squeeze, it is important to use a firm squeeze on the fleshy part of the arm or shoulder. In a high-stress situation, a team member might not feel a squeeze through thick layers of gear or body armor. It is also important to execute a squeeze and not a "tap" or "leg bump." In a high-stress situation, a team member might mistake incidental contact or an accidental bump for the ready signal and move out when the team is not actually ready. Using a firm, positive squeeze makes it impossible to mistake incidental contact for the ready signal. Finally, depending on the situation and the experience level of the team members, some teams might want to simplify the ready signal. For example, it is possible to eliminate the thumb back and only use the squeeze forward. Once the initial entry is complete and the team is inside the building, it is preferable to simplify the ready signal even further. After the initial entry, the second team member can control all movement. The second team member will look around to ensure the team is ready, then pass a squeeze to the first team member, making movement quicker and easier. Experienced teams that train together frequently may be able to flow from room to room without using a signal.

# TIGHT STACK ON AN OPEN DOOR

## Team Member Positioning

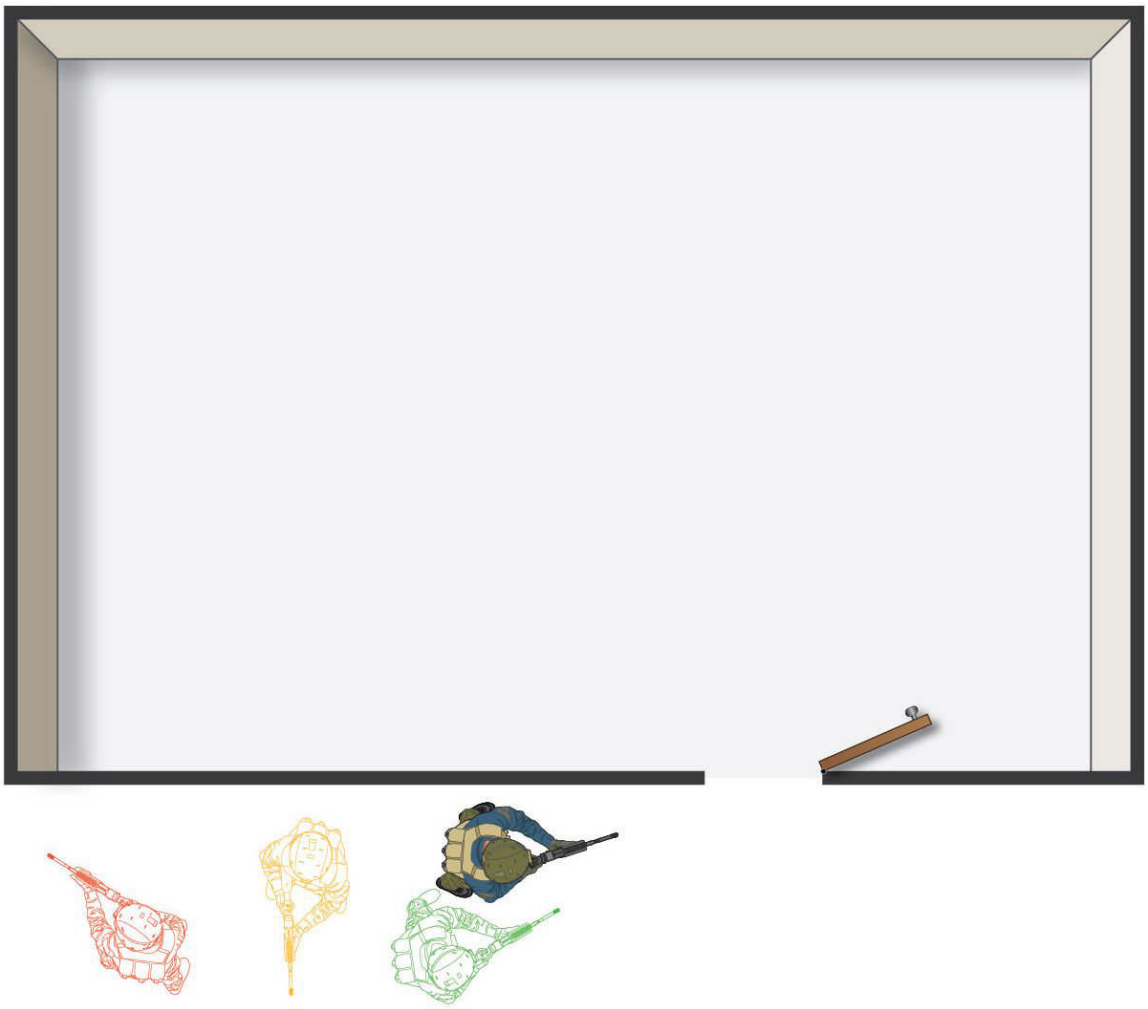
It is preferable not to predetermine the order of team members in the stack. As the team moves from room to room, it will become increasingly difficult to shuffle team members around into the correct order and attempting to do so will slow movement considerably. Instead it is best to allow stacking order to remain as flexible as possible. However, it is good to apply some general rules to stacking order. For example, it is preferable for the team leader not to be the first or second person to enter the room. If there is a dedicated shotgun breacher on the team, the breacher might want to remain last in the stack or second in the stack depending on unit SOPs. For tactical teams, it can be useful to have two designated shotgun breachers per team. That way, if one shotgun goes down, the other breacher can step forward with no delay.



# TIGHT STACK ON AN OPEN DOOR

## Lead Team Member Positioning

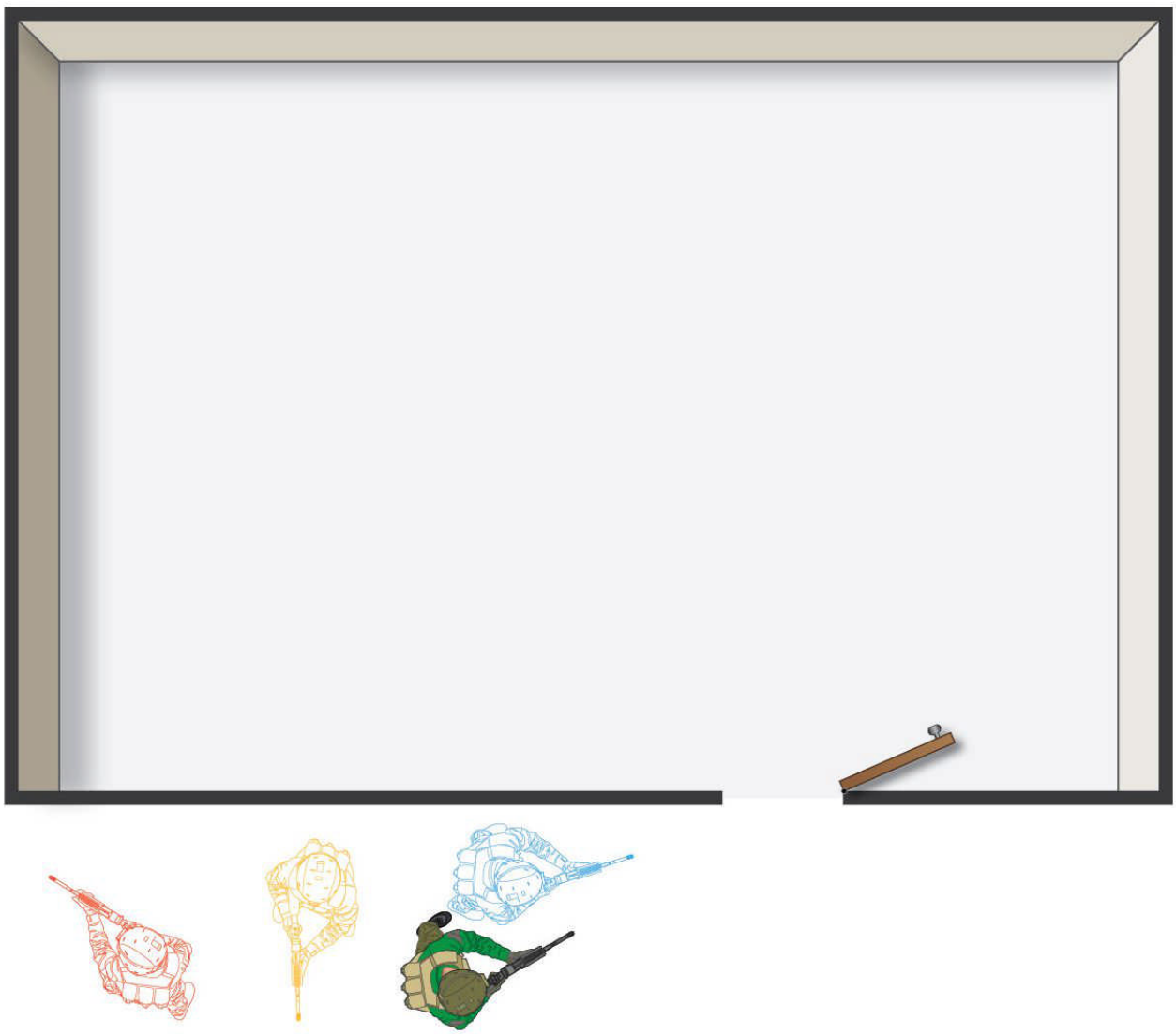
The lead team member's main responsibility is to provide security on the door. The lead team member should maintain some distance from the door to avoid indiscriminate fire. Enemies tend to spray bullets in the direction of the door so it is advisable to stay slightly back. Remember that most interior walls are not bulletproof and the chances of getting shot through a wall are very high. Also, if a team member gets too close to the door, his/her shadow can extend across the opening and compromise the team. The lead team member should also avoid touching or bumping into the wall because doing so will make noise and might also increase the chances of getting shot, since bullets tend to travel along walls. Keeping away from the wall also gives the lead team member a good angle to see into the room. Whether the door is open or closed, standing at a slight angle to see into the room can help prevent the enemy from surprising the team or spraying bullets around the corner.



# TIGHT STACK ON AN OPEN DOOR

## Second Team Member Positioning

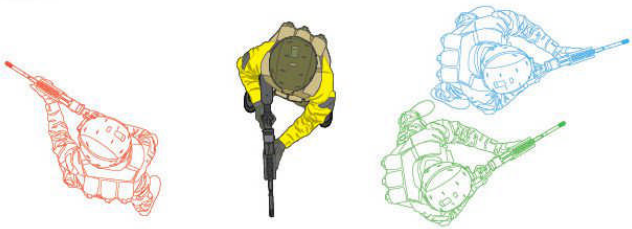
The second team member will be positioned slightly to the outside of the lead team member, in a position to provide additional coverage on the door. It is always preferable to have two guns on the door. If the first team member goes down, the second team member can return fire immediately. While the second team member might choose to provide cover to the front, he/she should at least be capable of pivoting to engage the door without bumping into the first team member.



# TIGHT STACK ON AN OPEN DOOR

## Third Team Member Positioning

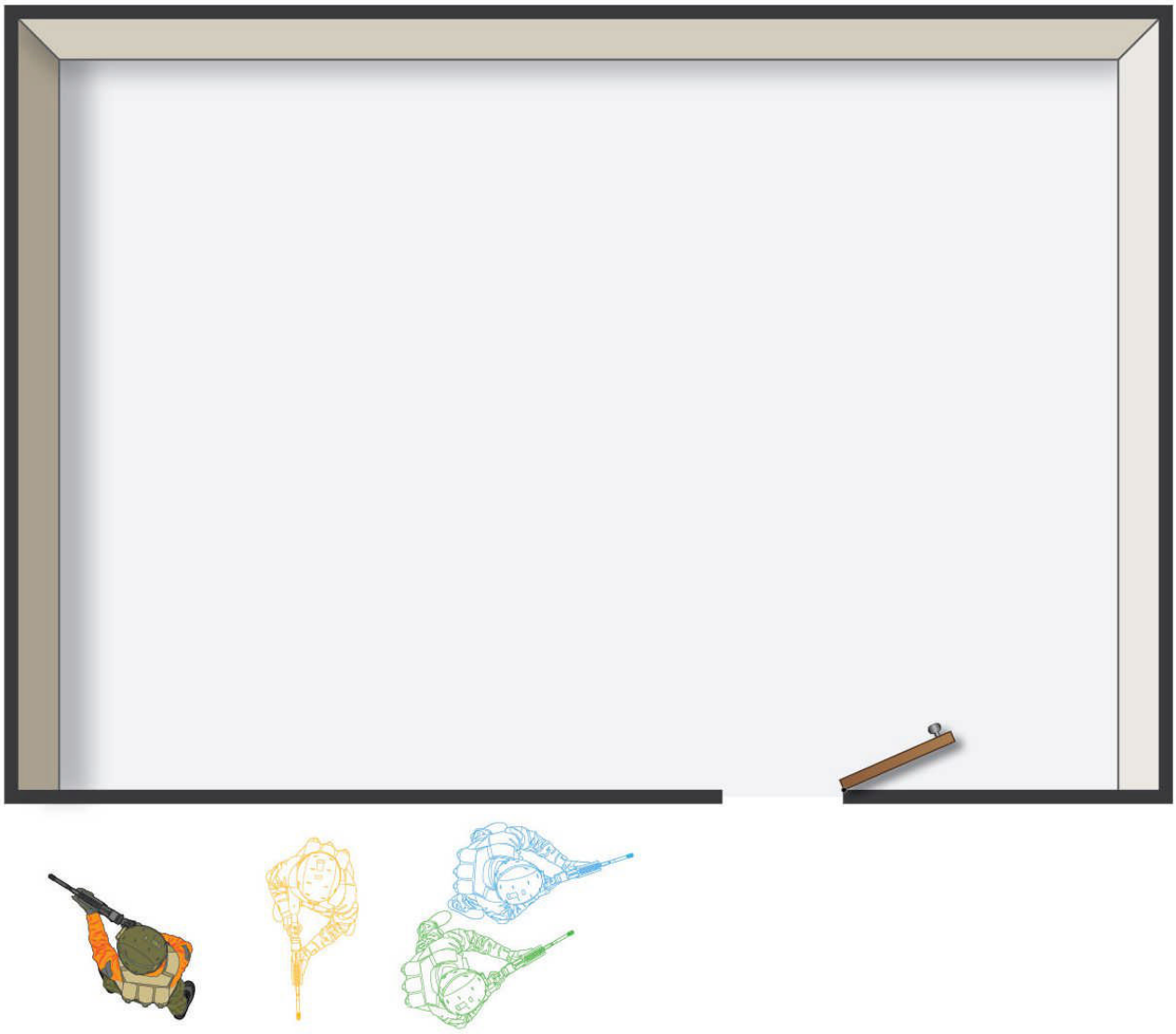
The third team member, who is normally the team leader, will be positioned behind the second team member. The team leader should avoid being first or second into the room. Instead, the team leader should go into the room as number three or four in the stack. If for any reason the team has to split into two-person elements, the team leader should still avoid being first into the room. The third team member will provide cover in whatever directions are not covered by the rest of the team. This might mean providing cover to the front, outward, rear or upward towards upper story windows.



# TIGHT STACK ON AN OPEN DOOR

## Fourth Team Member Positioning

The last team member will provide rear security for the team. It is important that the last team member avoid turning his/her back to the team completely. Instead, the last team member should angle his/her body to be able to see the stack with peripheral vision and reduce the chances of being left behind. This is particularly important when operating in the dark. In general, it is not necessary to be overly concerned with orienting the armor plate in a particular direction, since hostile fire can come unexpectedly from any angle. Instead, moving naturally in an athletic, fighter's stance will prove more beneficial than constantly attempting to "square off" to every potential threat.



# TIGHT STACK ON AN OPEN DOOR

## Positioning for Additional/Fewer Personnel

If there are more than four team members on the team, the additional team members assume a similar role and position as the third team member and distribute their cover to protect the team from all angles. If there are only three team members on the team, the roles of the first two team members will remain the same but the third team member will have to cover additional angles and also provide rear security for the team.

# TIGHT STACK ON AN OPEN DOOR

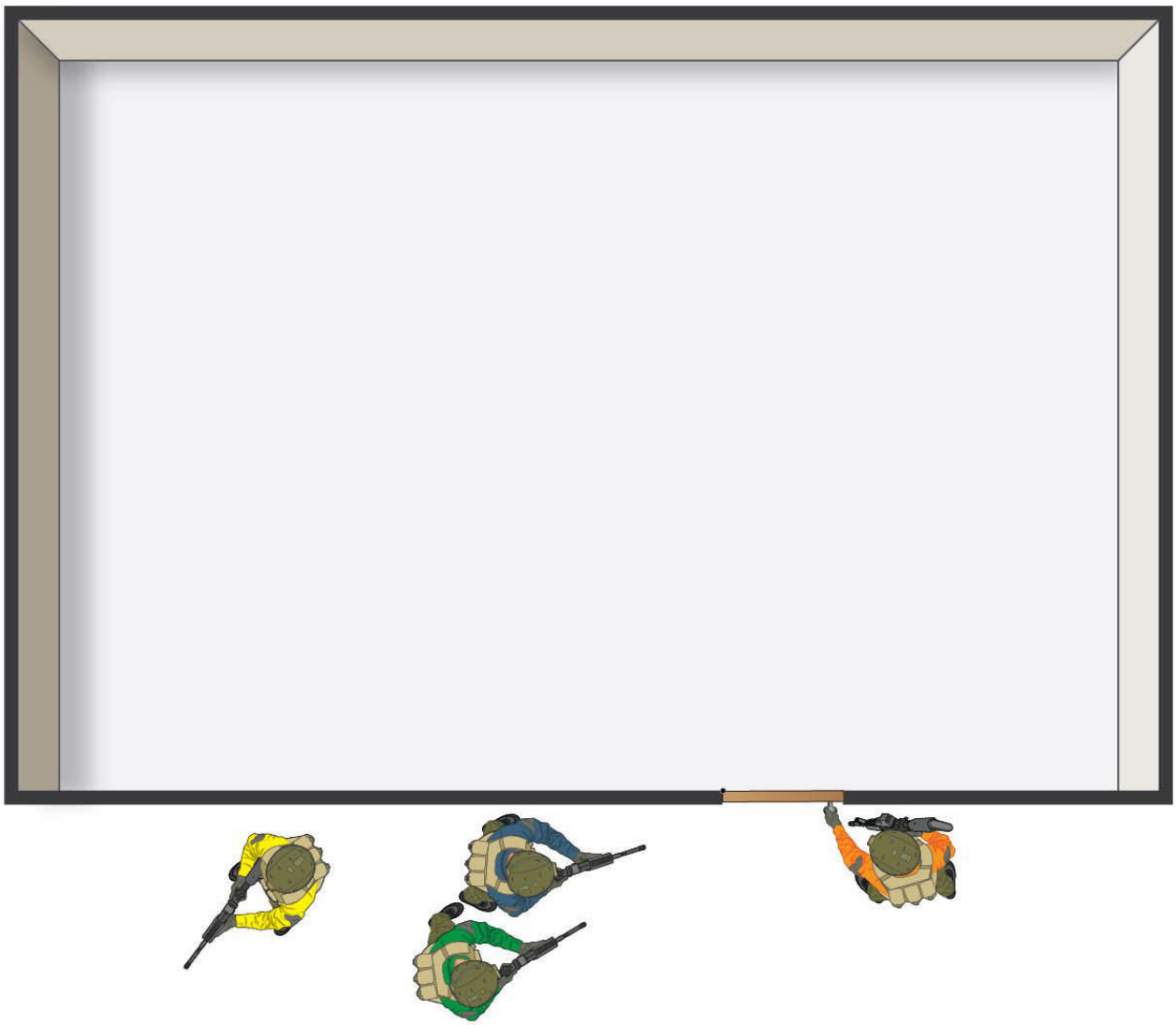
## Stacking with Heavy and Light Side

It is also possible for additional team members to stack on the opposite side of the door. However, it is ideal for the number of team members on each side of the door to be uneven. When there are an uneven number of team members on each side of the door this will mean there is a "heavy side" and "light side." Having a heavy side and light side helps coordinate the entry process since all of the team members on the heavy side will enter first and then the team members on the light side will follow. While it is possible to enter with equal number of team members on each side of the door, this can create confusion about which side will enter the room first.

# TIGHT STACK ON A CLOSED DOOR

## Team Member Positioning

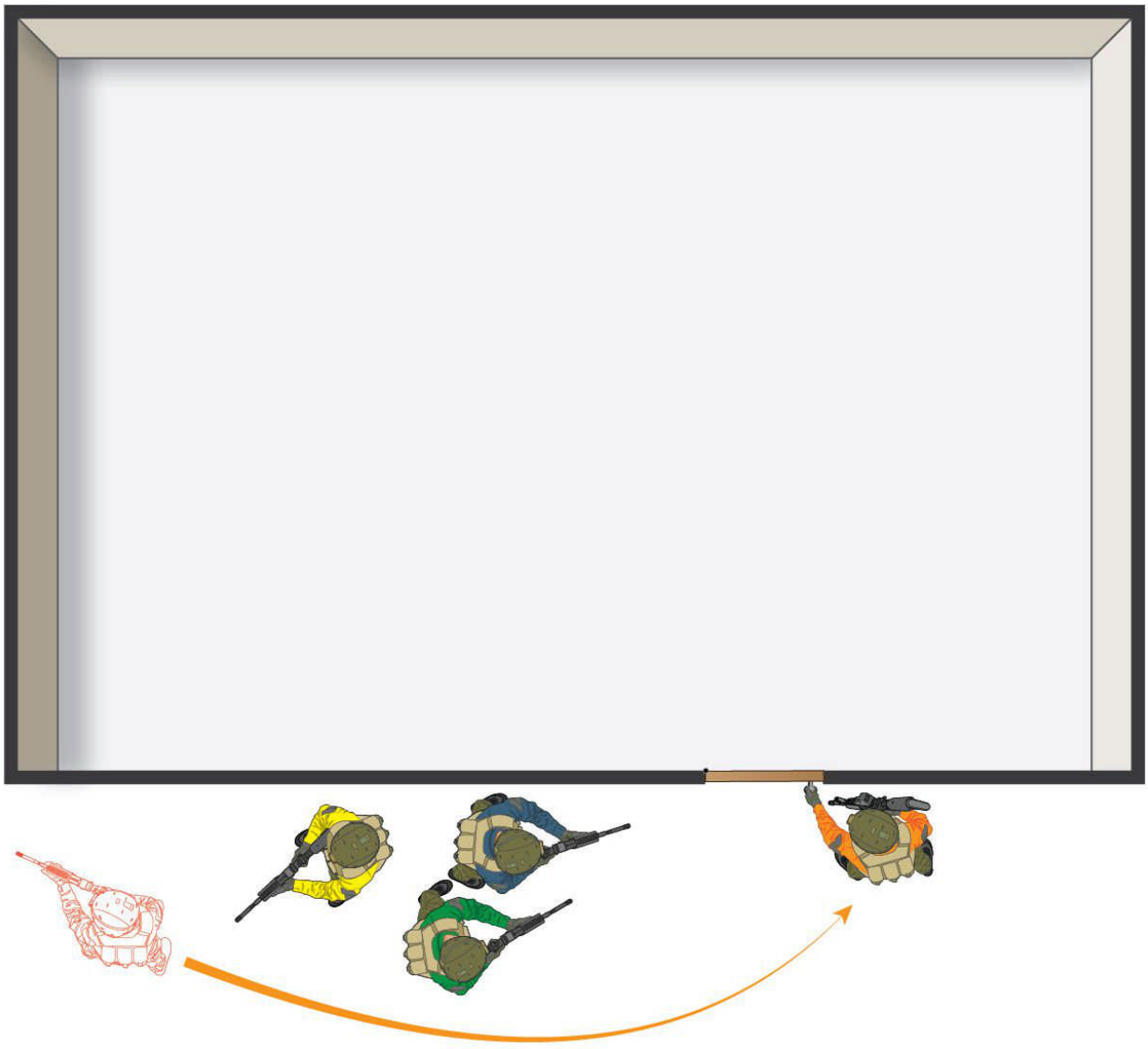
If the door is closed, the general positioning of team members will remain the same. However, one team member will generally have to move to the opposite side of the door to act as a breacher. Depending on the situation and the team's SOPs, this can either be the last team member, the second team member or the first team member. The positioning of the doorknob and whether the door opens in or out is not of critical importance. While some teams might have preferences about the best place to position the stack in relation to the doorknob, being overly rigid in such preferences can cause confusion in a high-stress situation and slow the team's movement speed. Generally it is best to be able to enter the room quickly and aggressively without worrying too much about the positioning of the doorknob.



# TIGHT STACK ON A CLOSED DOOR

## OPTION 1 – Last Team Member Opens the Door

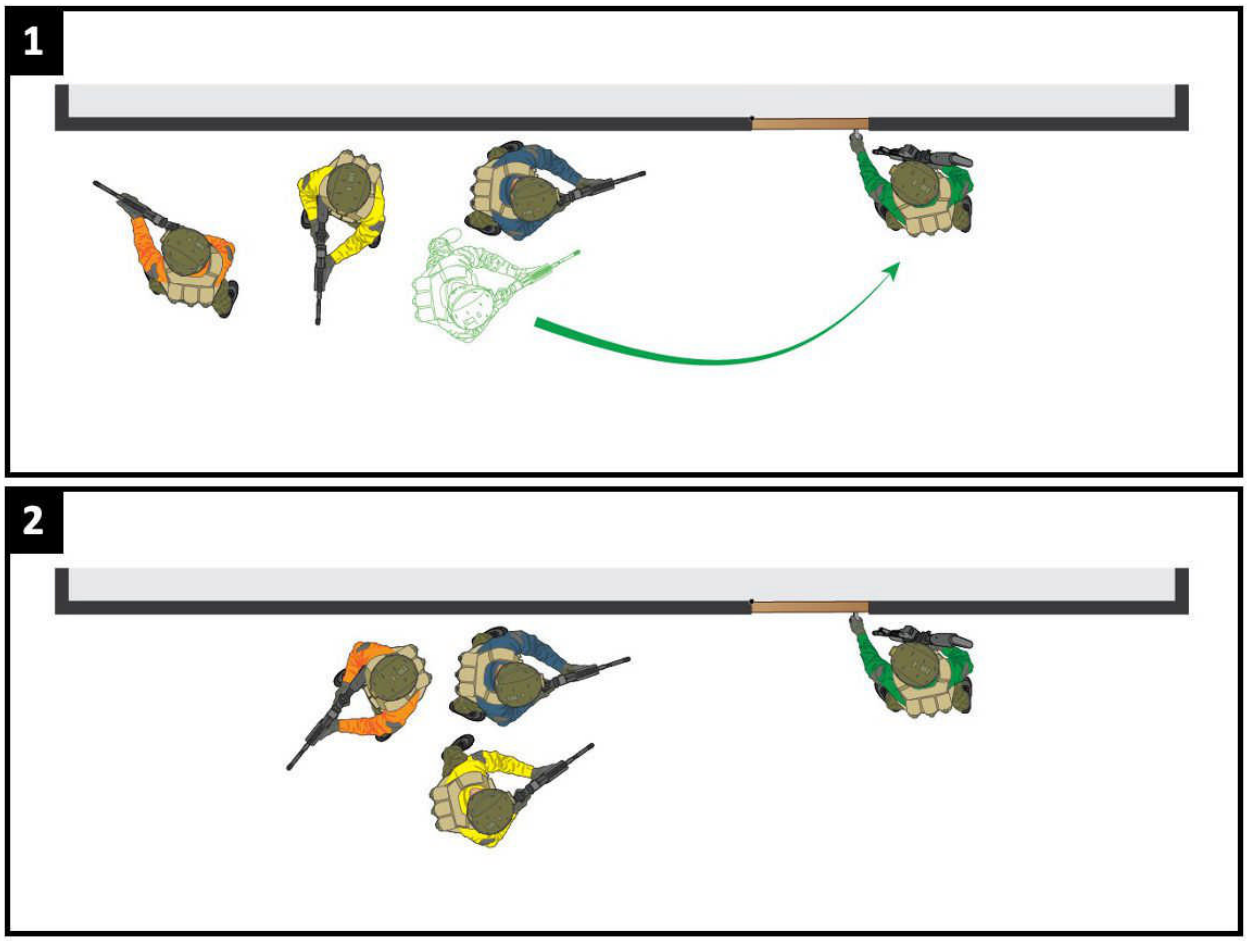
In some cases the last team member will be the breacher. The team leader has the option of calling the breacher forward to open a door. This is particularly the case for an exterior door or any other door the team leader expects might be locked or barricaded. When the breacher is called, the breacher will move around the team to the opposite side of the door to open it for the team. In this case, the third team member will become the last team member and must pick up rear security. In some situations, another team member may want to cover the breacher's back.



# TIGHT STACK ON A CLOSED DOOR

## OPTION 2 – Second Team Member Opens the Door

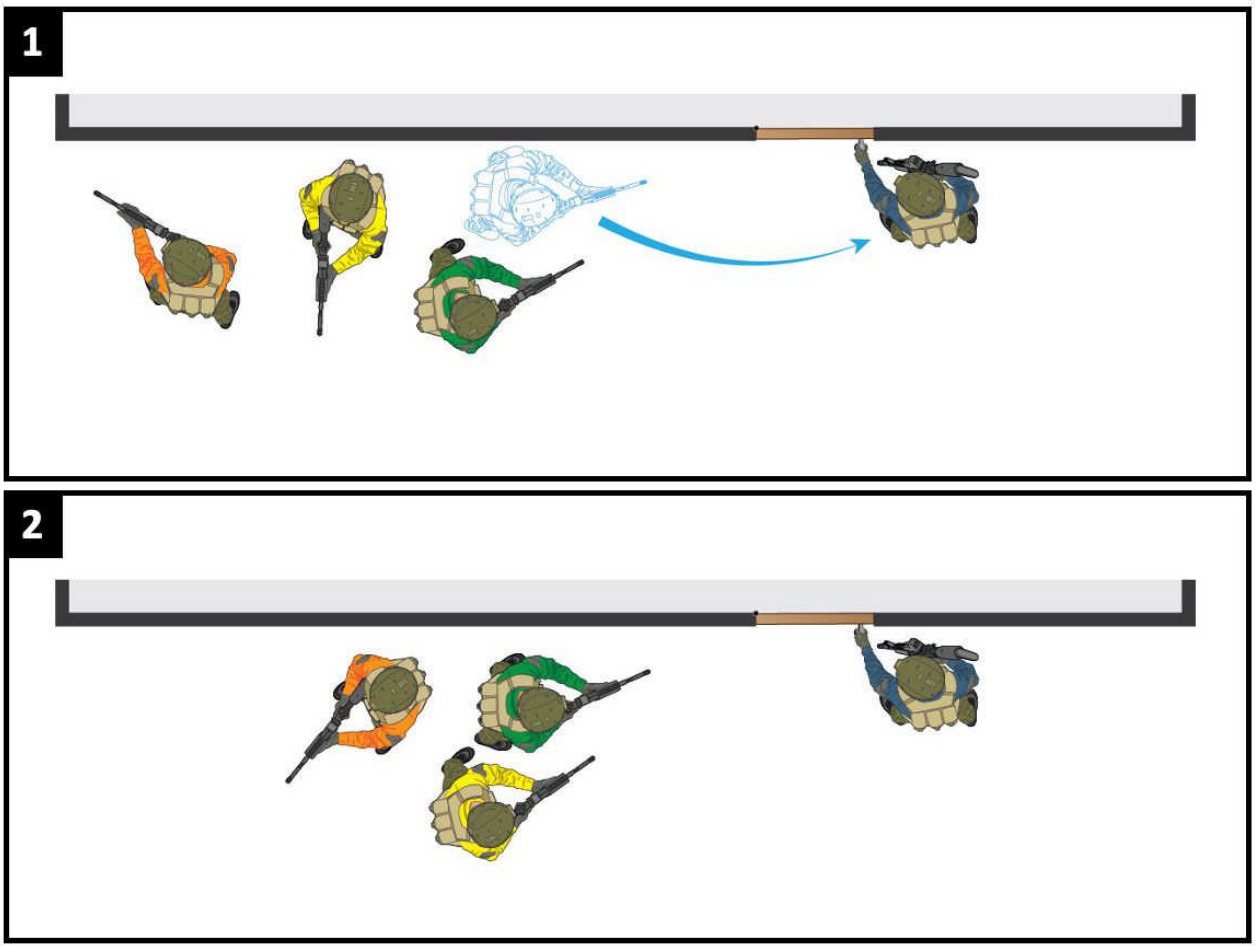
Some teams might have two breachers. If this is the case, it is a good option for the alternate breacher to position himself/herself second in the stack. In other cases, if the door is not locked, the second team member might decide to move across to act as the breacher and open the door. In these cases, the first team member will stop short of the door and provide coverage, focusing all attention on the door in case an enemy opens it. The second team member will then move around the first team member to the opposite side of the door and open the door for the team.



# TIGHT STACK ON A CLOSED DOOR

## OPTION 3 – Lead Team Member Opens the Door

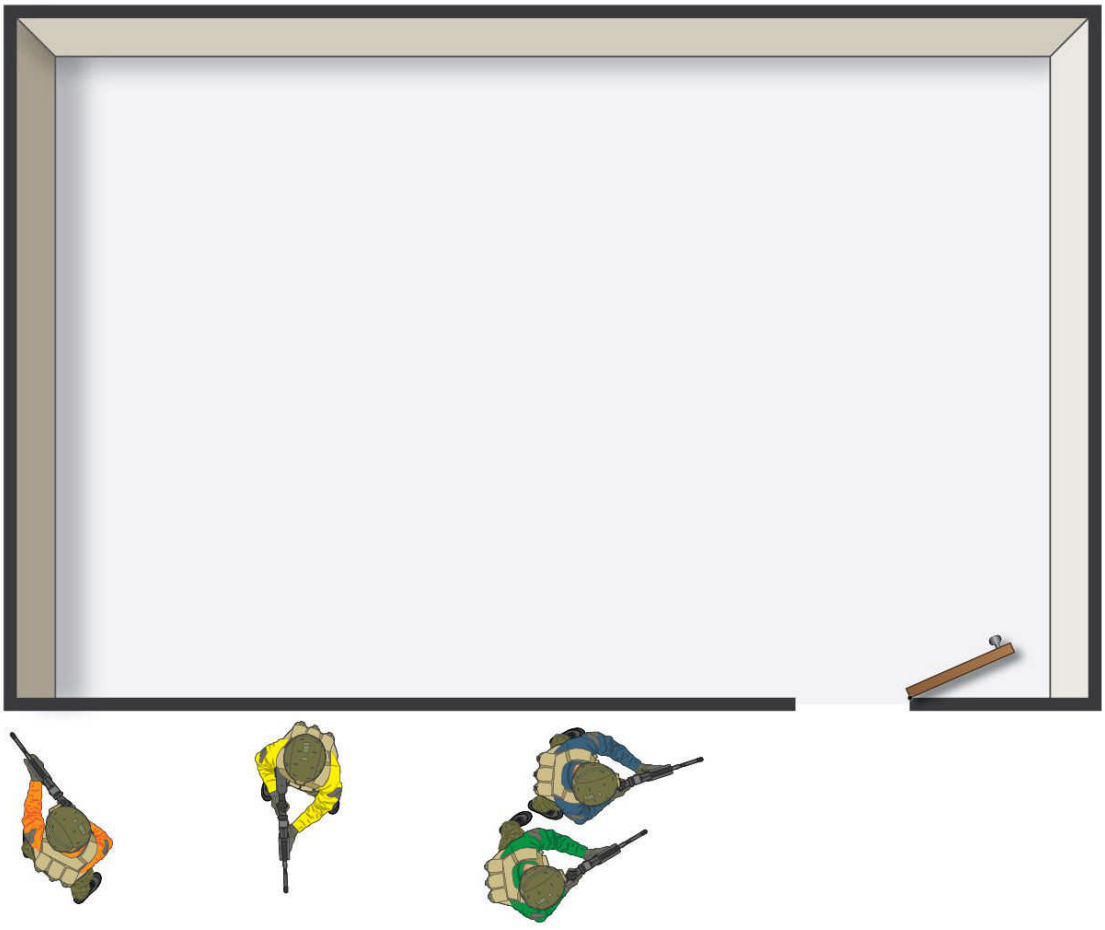
If the door is closed but not locked, one of the quickest ways to enter the room is for the lead team member to immediately move past the door to the other side to act as the breacher. In these cases, the second team member will immediately assume the lead team member's role and provide coverage on the door in case an enemy opens it. The two previous options of either the lead team member or second team member opening the door are interchangeable. Using the "free-flow" concept, the lead team member and second team member can base their actions off of each other. Therefore, if the first team member stops to cover the door, the second team member can automatically move around to act as the breacher. If the first team member moves across the door to breach, the second team member can automatically assume the lead team member's position. Also, there are some cases when the lead team member will not be able to move to the other side of the door and will have to "self-breach."



# LOOSE STACK

## Team Member Positioning

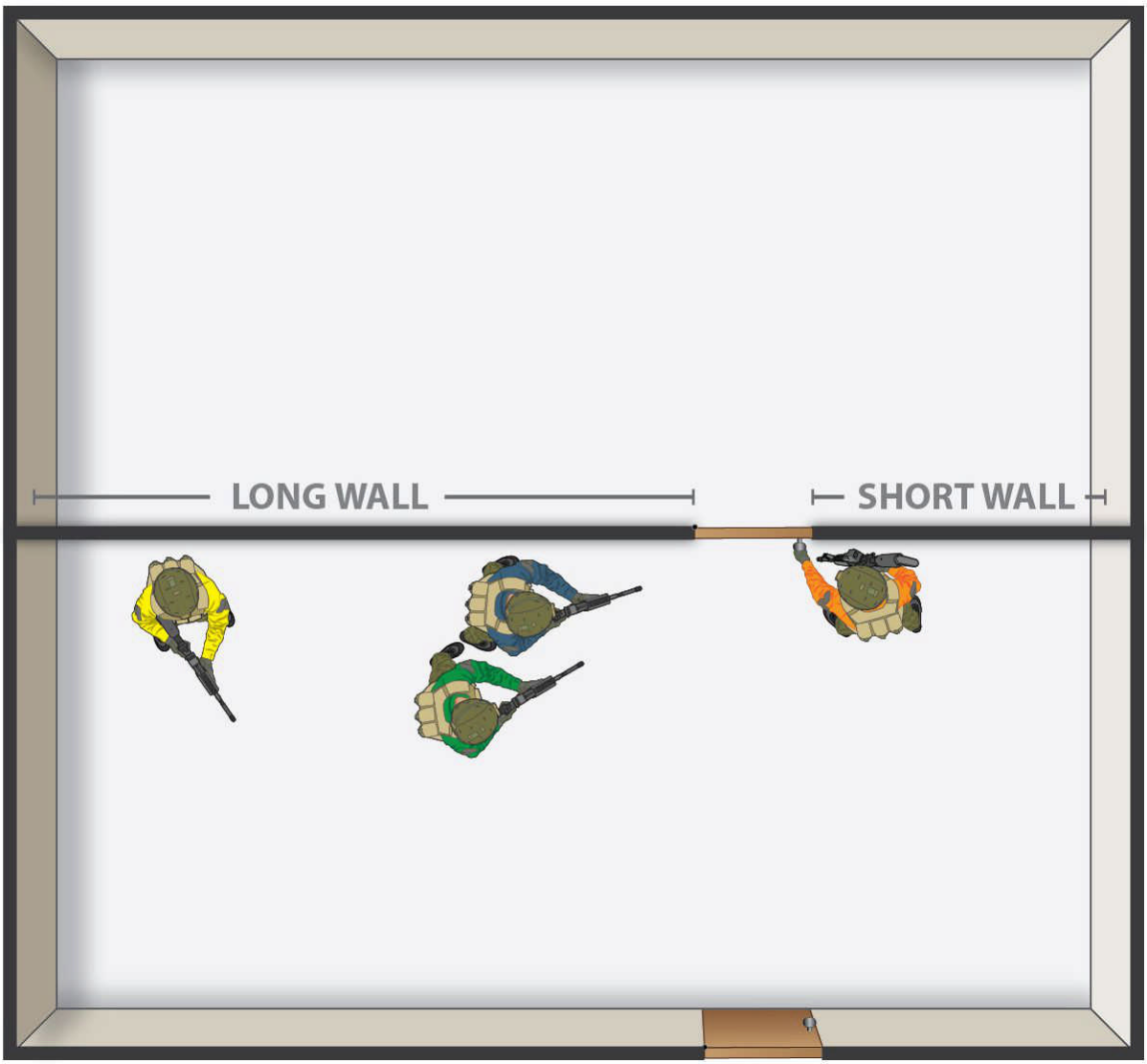
While it is useful to understand the close stack when learning the fundamentals of CQB, the loose stack is generally the preferred technique. In a loose stack the roles and positioning of the first two team members remain the same. However, the remaining team members will spread out and assume good firing positions behind cover or concealment if possible. Spreading out minimizes risk to the team and makes it harder for a single burst of automatic fire or a single grenade to incapacitate the entire team. However, while the loose stack is safer, it is also more difficult to execute and requires precise coordination and timing. Once the first two team members enter the room, the remaining team members must converge on the door and enter in sequence. There is no fixed order for entering the room after the first two team members. Whichever team member arrives at the door first will enter first. So, it can be difficult to ensure the remaining team members enter smoothly. If a team does not practice the loose stack often, there can be large gaps between team members as they enter the room. In some cases, team members that are not alert might even be left behind.



# STACKING ON INTERIOR DOORS

## Team Member Positioning

Once the team has made entry, the process for stacking on interior doors is similar to the process for stacking on exterior doors. One key difference is that because interior doors are often unlocked, it is not always necessary to send a dedicated breacher around to open every door. Rather, the lead or second team member can quickly move across the door and open it for the team. A second critical point is that the team should attempt to stack on the "long wall" in each room. The long wall offers better cover and concealment and the most space for team members to spread out. In situations where the team has to stack on both sides of the door, the heavy side should generally be on the long wall and the light side should be on the short wall.



# BASIC URBAN COMBAT
# Immediate Entry

Immediate entry (as opposed to delayed entry) is useful for situations where the team needs to move through a building quickly or enter and clear a room without hesitation. In conventional urban combat, there may be times when speed is critical or a greater degree of aggressive action is needed to gain the initiative in an assault. While immediate entry assumes greater risk, sometimes assuming risk is necessary to maintain momentum.

When conducting an immediate entry, the first two team members will clear the doorway, immediate area, corners, and then move to their domination points within the room. These two team members will maintain good visual contact with each other once they reach their domination points. The third and fourth team members will clear the center area of the room and check behind the door. Whoever is the last team member to enter the room will position near the door and provide rear security for the team.

When conducting immediate or delayed entry, the "free flow" method helps teams maintain the initiative and minimize confusion in high-stress situations. When using the free flow method, as little as possible should be scripted or predetermined. For example, team members will not predetermine whether the first team member goes left or right into the room. Instead, all other team members react to the first team member's decision. Each team member follows the principle: "move in the opposite direction of the person in front of you." This helps team members stay outwardly focused on the situation instead of inwardly focused on a set checklist or procedure.

This same free flow concept applies to all aspects of CQB. If the first team member picks up coverage on an open door, the second team member will flow past. If instead the first team member moves past, the second team member sees the vulnerable angle and picks up coverage on the door. If there are two danger areas, the first team member will pick one and cover it. The next team member will naturally pick up the remaining danger area. Minimal communication or discussion is needed. Team members simply react to each other's actions and keep moving. Even when team members make mistakes (which is inevitable) they should keep moving and maintain momentum.

# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

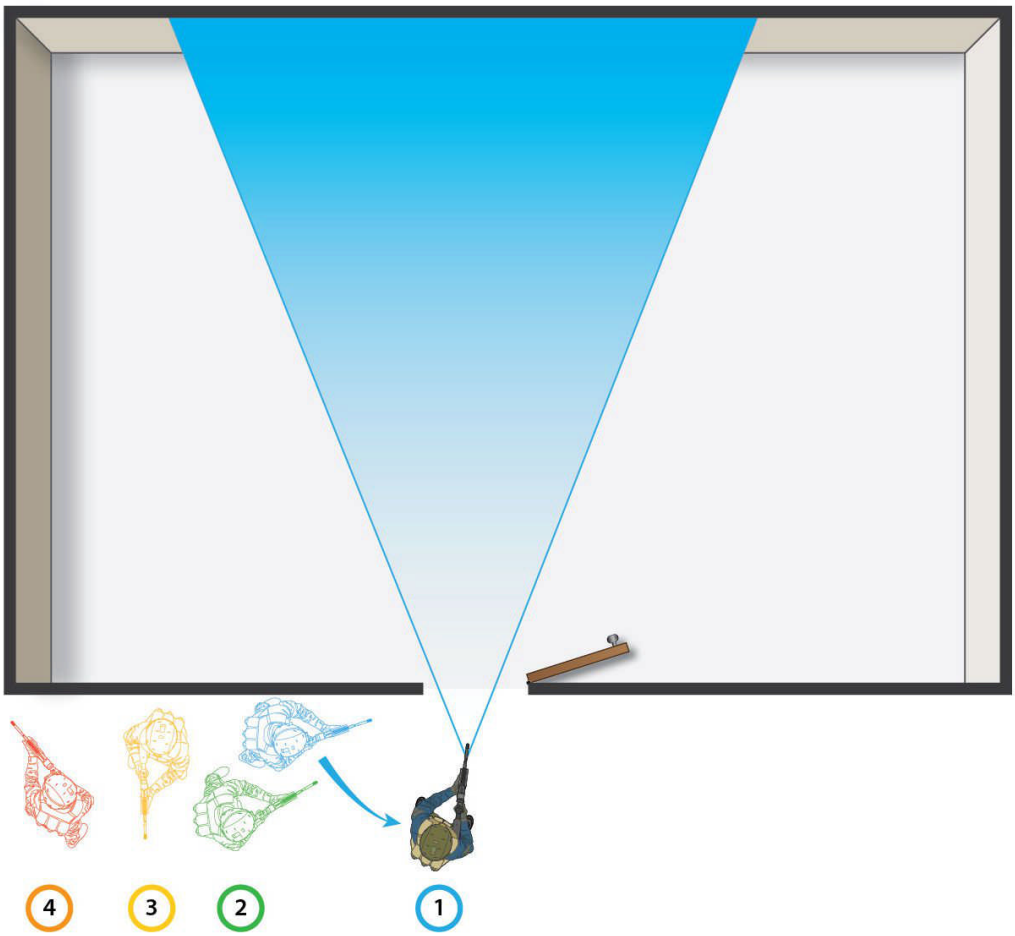
## Overview

Rooms generally fall into two categories: center-fed and corner-fed. A center-fed room is a room where the door is in the center of the wall, allowing the team member to move either left or right when entering the room. When faced with a center-fed, open door, the team will stack using one of the methods already discussed. Once again, the loose stack is preferred to maximize team member safety. The following pages will describe the actions of each team member in sequence. However, note that in actual application, all team members will attempt to enter the room as quickly as possible. For example, the second team member will enter the room and begin clearing immediately following the lead team member. **NOTE: A room where the door is very close to the corner but is not completely flush with the corner (see bottom example) is still considered a corner-fed room.**

# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 1 – Clear the Doorway

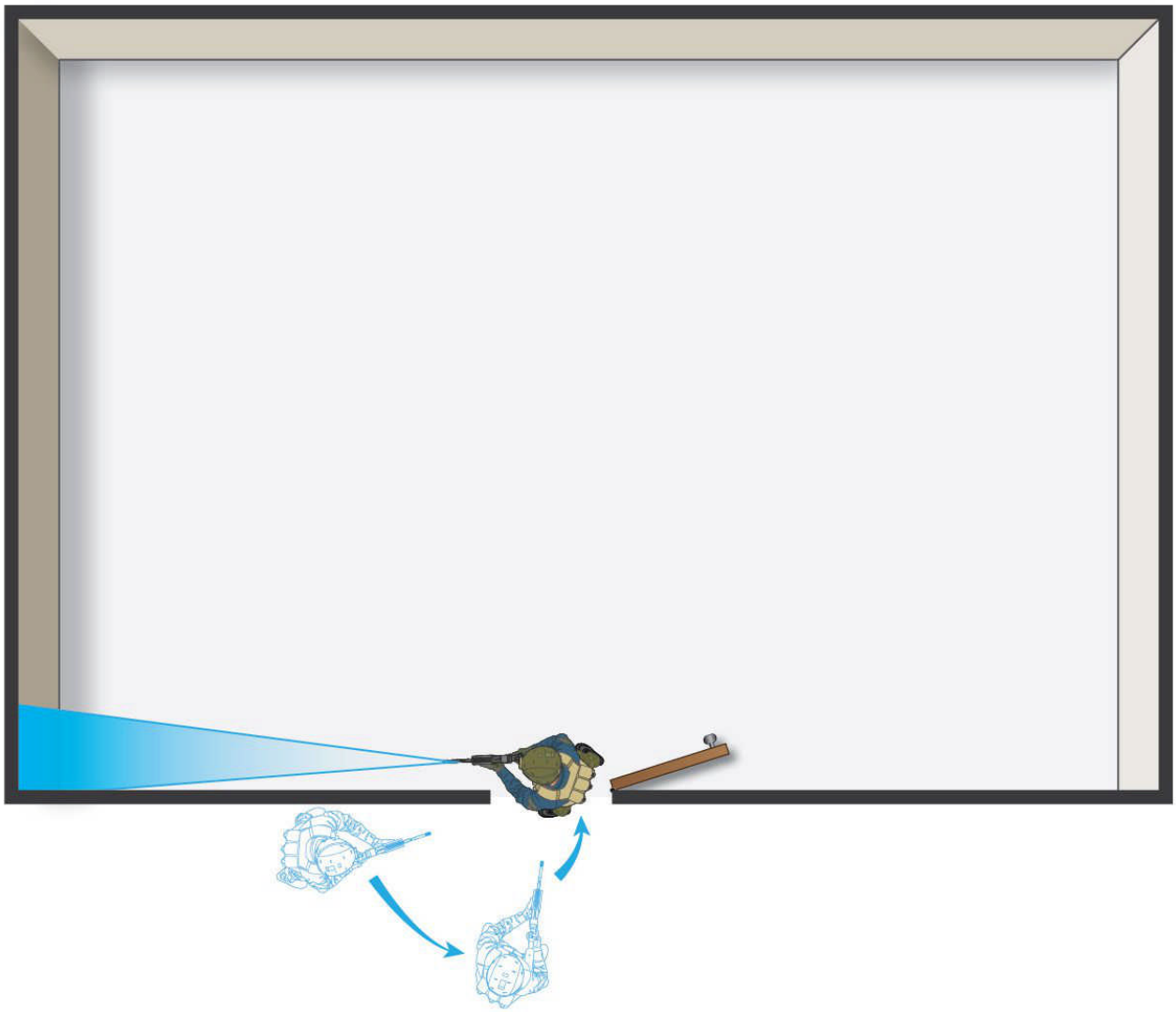
The lead team member steps outward slightly to have a better angle of vision into the room while ensuring that the doorway is clear. The lead team member can also take this opportunity to engage deep threats in the center of the room. If the team member does not clear the doorway and the immediate area around the doorway but instead moves directly towards the corner, it is possible that the team member will fail to see an enemy near the doorway until it is too late. This enemy can then block the whole team's entry into the room. Therefore, if the first team member steps out slightly before entering and takes a moment to clear the doorway and the area around it, the team member will be able to engage any immediate threats *before* entering the room. This helps the team member avoid being shot by threats hiding in the corner. **NOTE: This section shows the movements of each team member individually. However, when actually conducting the entry, all team members will enter the room together with as little space between team members as possible.**



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 2 – Clear the Corner

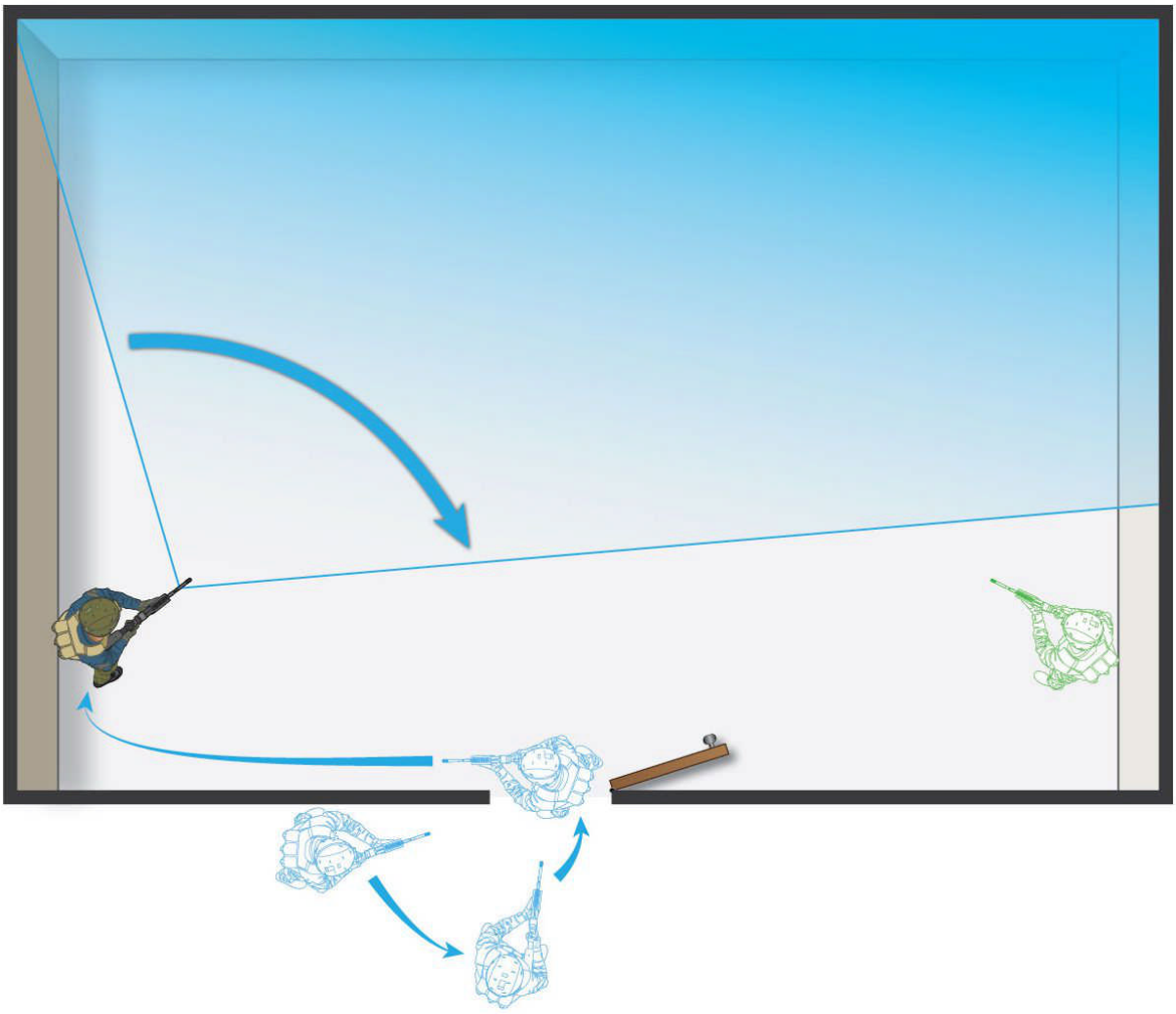
Clearing the doorway from outside the room will allow the lead team member to turn immediately to the corner once inside the room. The lead team member should not predetermine which direction to turn. In general, the lead team member should turn to address the greatest threat first. For example, if the team member hears movement to the left, he/she might want to clear the left corner. However, in the end, the decision of which way to turn is up to the lead team member. Once the lead team member makes the turn, he/she will clear the corner and engage any threats in the corner until they are neutralized.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 3 – Move to Domination Point

Once the corner is clear, the lead team member should not stay focused on the corner but should instead immediately begin to scan inward while moving along the wall. The team member continues to scan and move towards his/her domination point. The domination point (depicted below) is slightly forward of the corner. Moving slightly forward in this way will give the lead team member a better angle to see behind furniture and obstacles in the room. The lead team member will continue to scan inward until the scan reaches a point three feet off the second team member's muzzle. At this point the lead team member will scan back and forth across his/her full sector several times to ensure the sector is clear and to identify potential danger areas. Experienced teams can shorten this deliberate scanning process and may also break each team member's sector into primary and secondary sectors.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

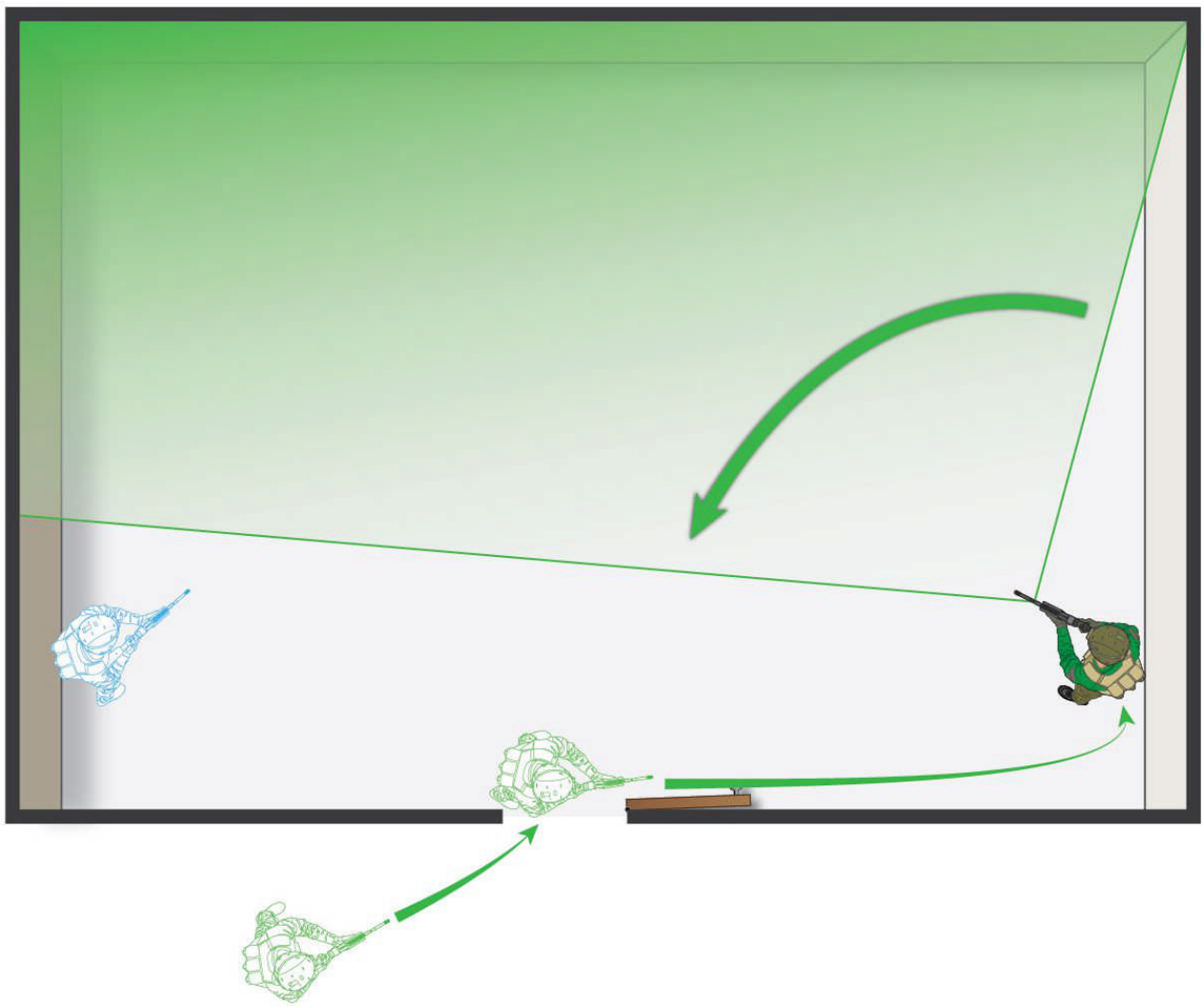
## SECOND TEAM MEMBER STEP 1 – Clear the Corner

The second team member will turn in the opposite direction of the lead team member. Once again, the lead team member can choose to turn either way. The second team member must remain alert and turn in the opposite direction. It is also critical that the second team member uses a tighter and more direct approach angle in order to enter the room as close as possible behind the lead team member. This is to ensure the lead team member's back is not left exposed. The lead team member clears one corner but his/her back will be exposed to any enemy standing in the other corner. Therefore, the second team member must clear the other corner as quickly as possible to cover the lead team member's back. Once the second team member makes the turn, he/she will clear the corner and engage any threats until they are neutralized.

# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## SECOND TEAM MEMBER STEP 2 – Move to Domination Point

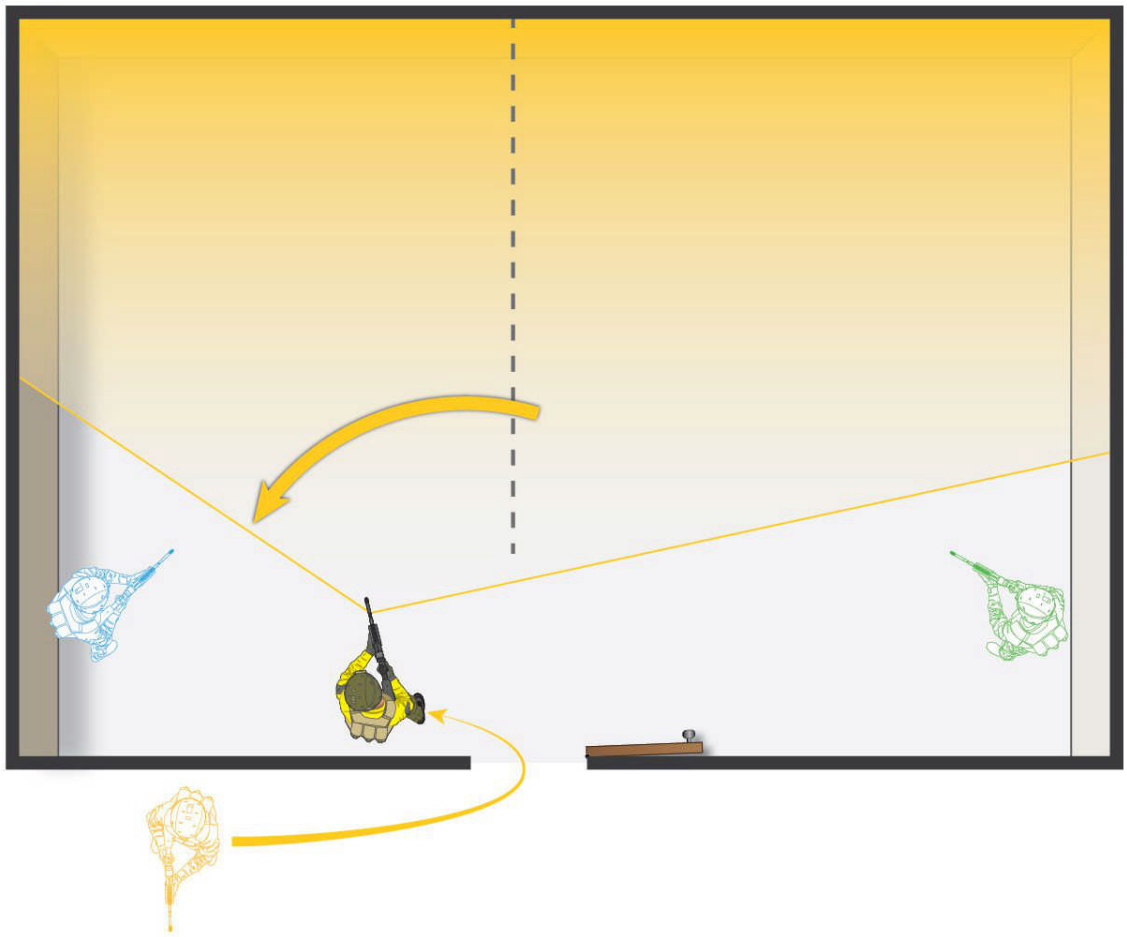
Once the corner is clear, the second team member should not stay focused on the corner but should instead immediately begin to scan inward while moving along the wall. The team member continues to scan and move towards his/her domination point. The domination point (depicted below) is slightly forward of the corner. The second team member will continue to scan inward until the scan reaches a point three feet off the lead team member's muzzle. At this point the second team member will scan back and forth across his/her full sector several times to ensure the sector is clear and to identify potential danger areas. Experienced teams can shorten this deliberate scanning process.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## THIRD TEAM MEMBER – Clear the Center and Scan

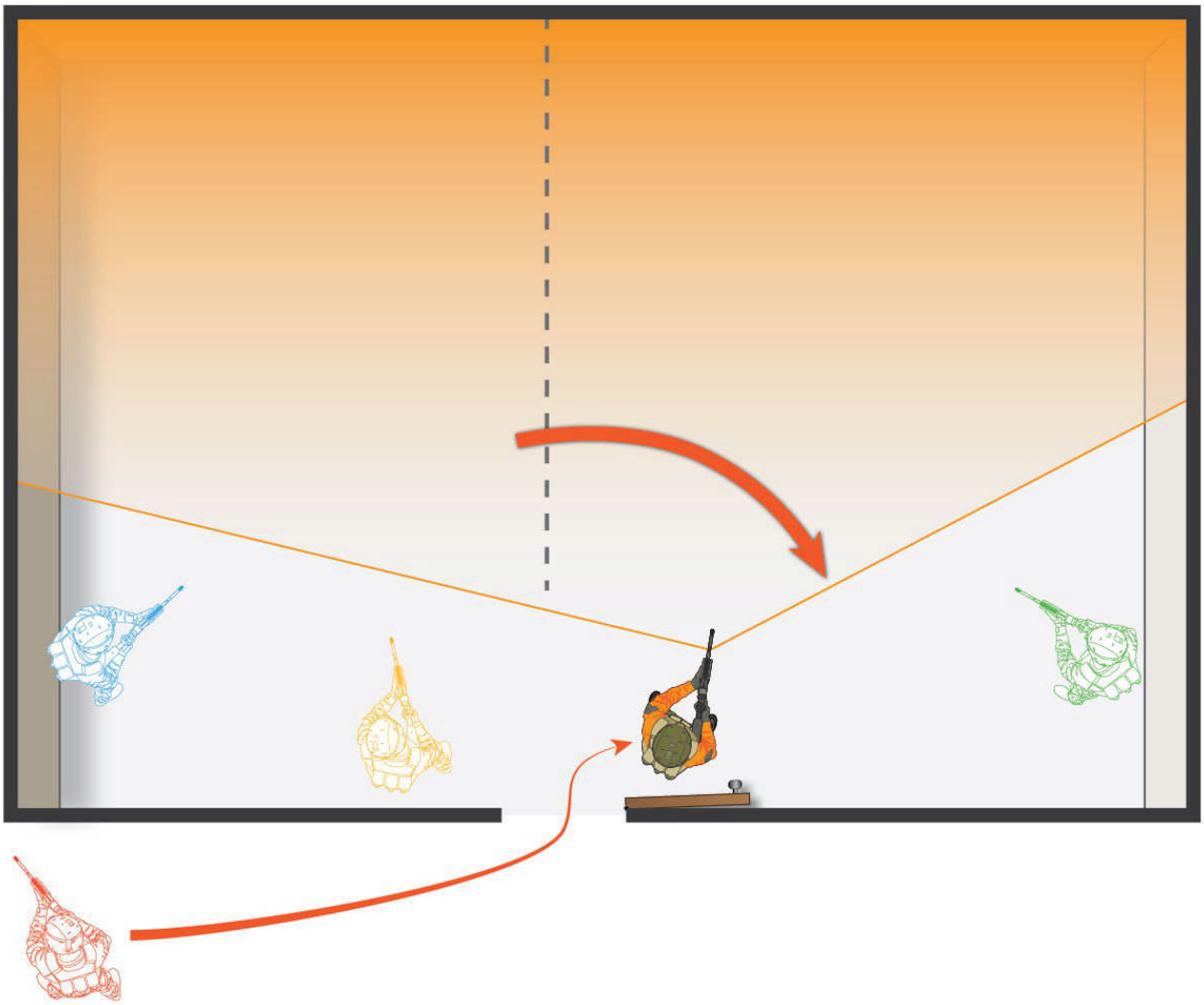
The third team member will enter the room, moving in the opposite direction of the second team member. Once again, the rule is "move in the opposite direction of the person in front of you." As the third team member enters the room, he/she will identify the center of the room and start to scan in the direction of movement. For example, if the third team member enters the room and moves to the left, he/she will scan from right to left, in the same direction as the entry movement. The third team member should also start the scan slightly behind the center point of the room. For example if the team member moves left, the scan will start to the right of the center point of the room. See the illustration below for further clarification. While scanning, the third team member will move to a domination point just to the side of the door. The third team member will continue the scan until it reaches a point three feet off the lead team member. The third team member will then scan back to a point three feet off the second team member. At this point the third team member will scan back and forth across his/her full sector several times to ensure the sector is clear and to identify potential danger areas.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## FOURTH TEAM MEMBER STEP 1 – Clear the Center and Scan

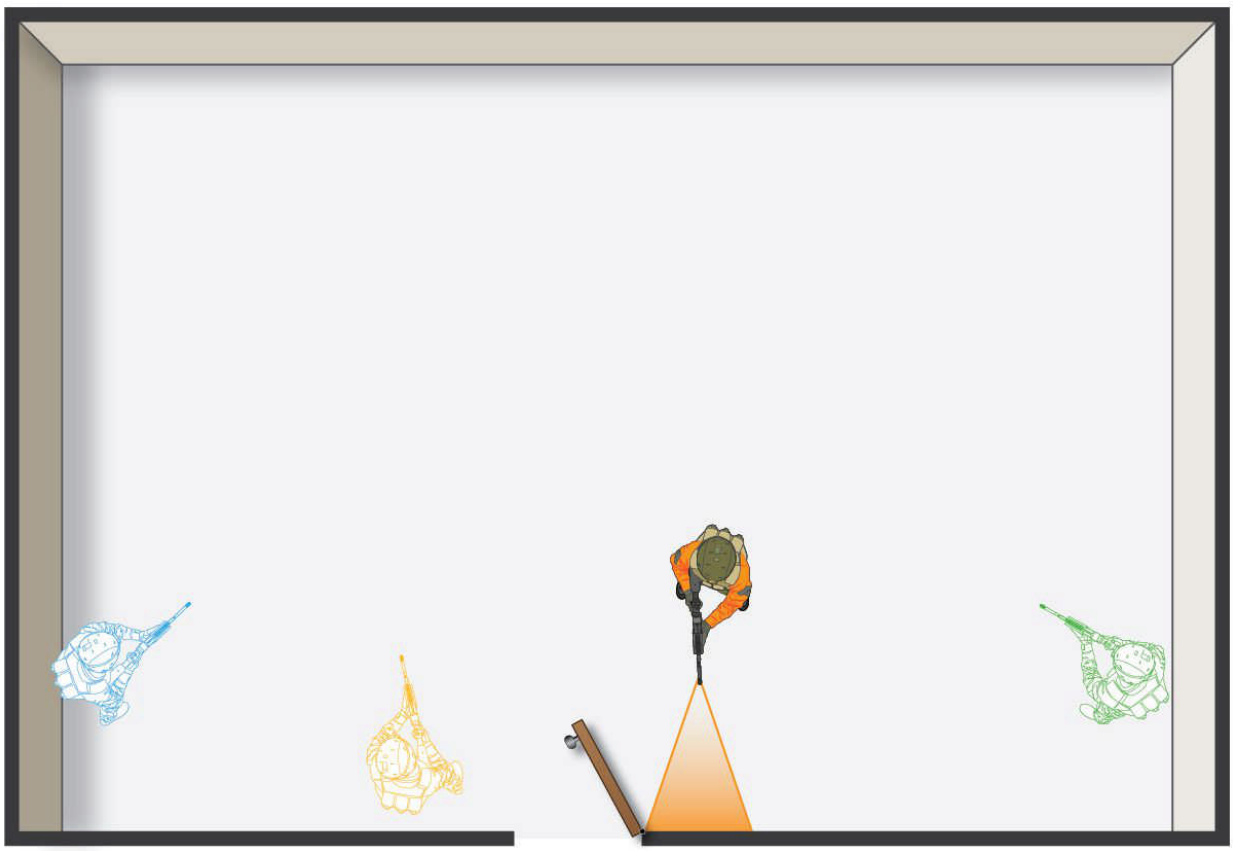
The fourth team member will enter the room, moving in the opposite direction of the third team member. Once again, the rule is "move in the opposite direction of the person in front of you." As the fourth team member enters the room, he/she will identify the center of the room and start to scan in the direction of movement. The fourth team member should also start the scan slightly behind the center point of the room. While scanning, the fourth team member will move to a domination point just to the side of the door. The fourth team member will continue the initial scan in the direction of movement until it reaches a point three feet off the second team member. The fourth team member will then scan back in the other direction to a point three feet off the lead team member. At this point the fourth team member will scan back and forth across his/ her full sector several times to ensure the sector is clear and to identify danger areas.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## FOURTH TEAM MEMBER STEP 2 – Check Behind the Door

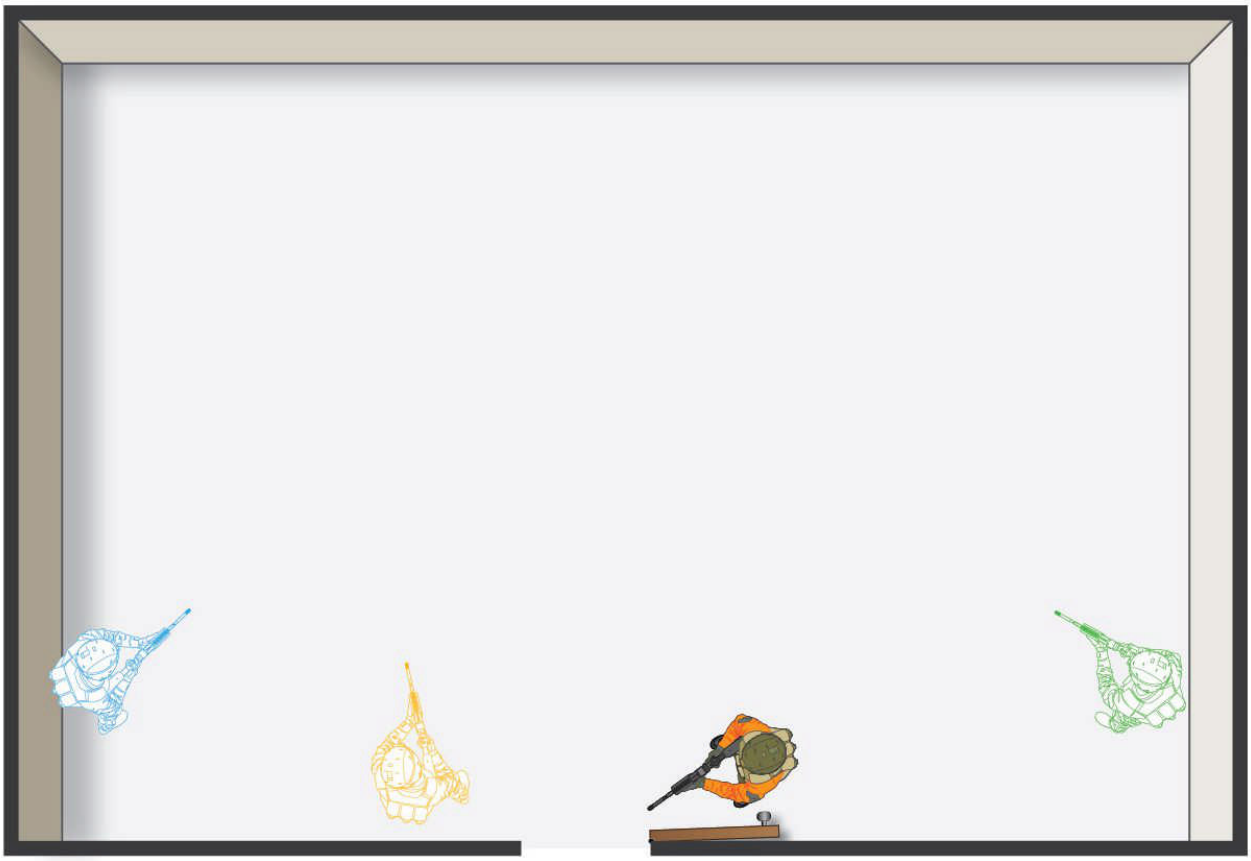
Once the fourth team member finishes clearing his/her sector, the fourth team member will turn quickly to check that no one is hiding behind the door. In some cases, if a team member detects a threat behind the door, he/she might need to address that threat immediately to protect the team. Either way, clearing behind the door is only necessary if the door opens inward. Also, if the door is completely flush with the wall and there is no way to hide behind it, the fourth team member might skip this step if time is critical. However, it is possible for smaller enemies to flatten themselves tightly to the wall behind the door. In other cases, buildings are designed in a way that leaves a small space or indentation behind the door. Finally, in a high-stress situation, team members may think the door is flush against the wall when it actually is not. Because of these factors it is always preferable to check behind the door. When checking behind the door, the team member should step back to ensure a hiding enemy cannot surge forward and grab the team member's weapon. The team member should also step directly back (90-degree angle with the wall) to achieve a "tactical-L" in case other team members need to engage the threat. Finally, depending on the room/door configuration, the third team member might be the one who checks behind the door.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## FOURTH TEAM MEMBER STEP 3 – Provide Rear Security

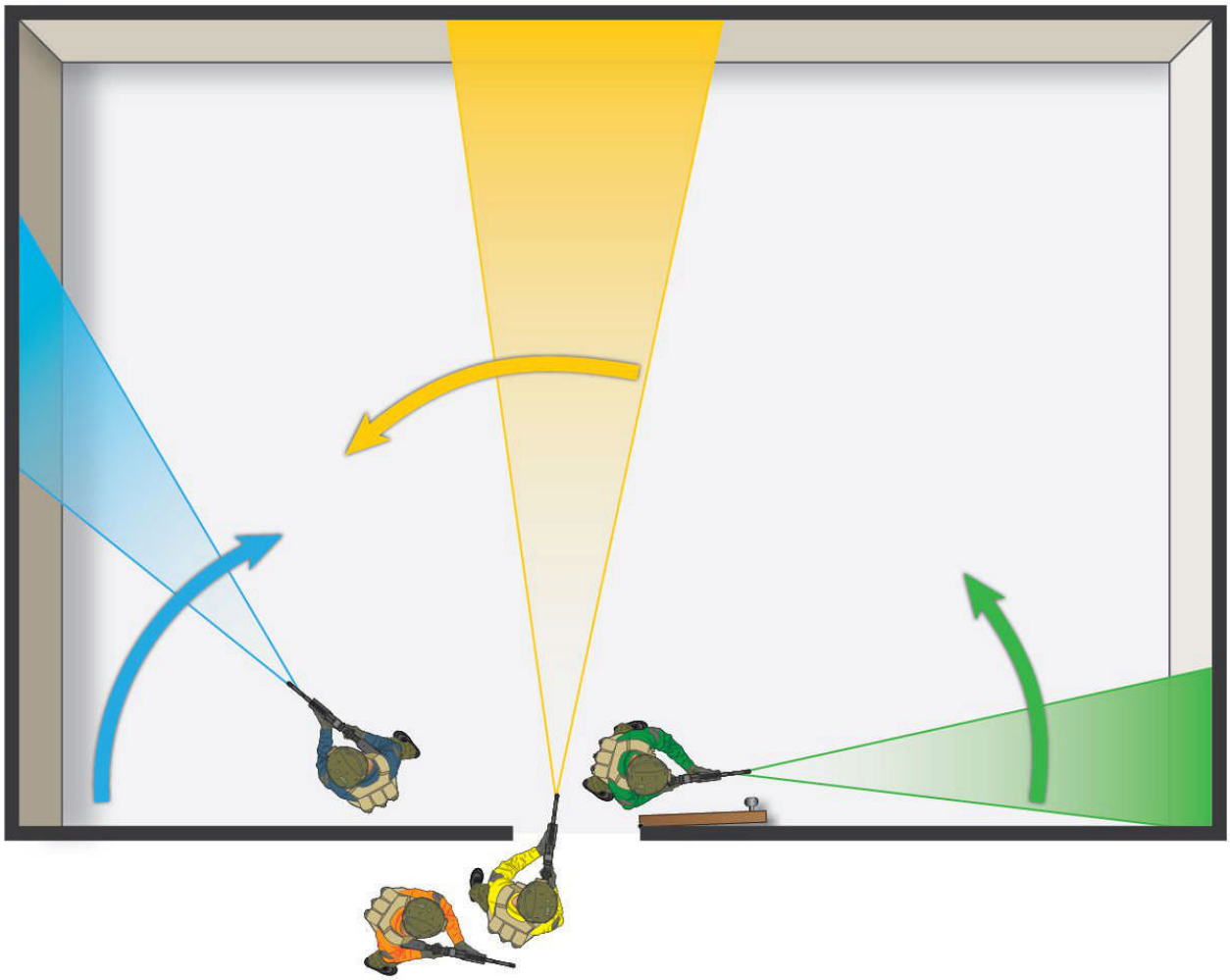
Once the fourth team member finishes clearing his/her sectors and checks behind the door, the fourth team member will turn around to provide rear security for the team. It is critical that the fourth team member not exit the room to provide rear security. There are many reasons for this. Team members have better cover and concealment when they remain in the room. Also, if the rear security team member goes down, fellow team members will not have to exit the room to drag the team member to safety. The fourth team member can reposition as needed to provide cover in either direction or peek his/her head and weapon out the door as necessary, but the fourth team member should remain in the room with the team. Finally, depending on the room/door configuration, the third team member might be the one who turns to provide rear security instead of the fourth team member.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## COMPLETE SEQUENCE 1 – First and Second Enter

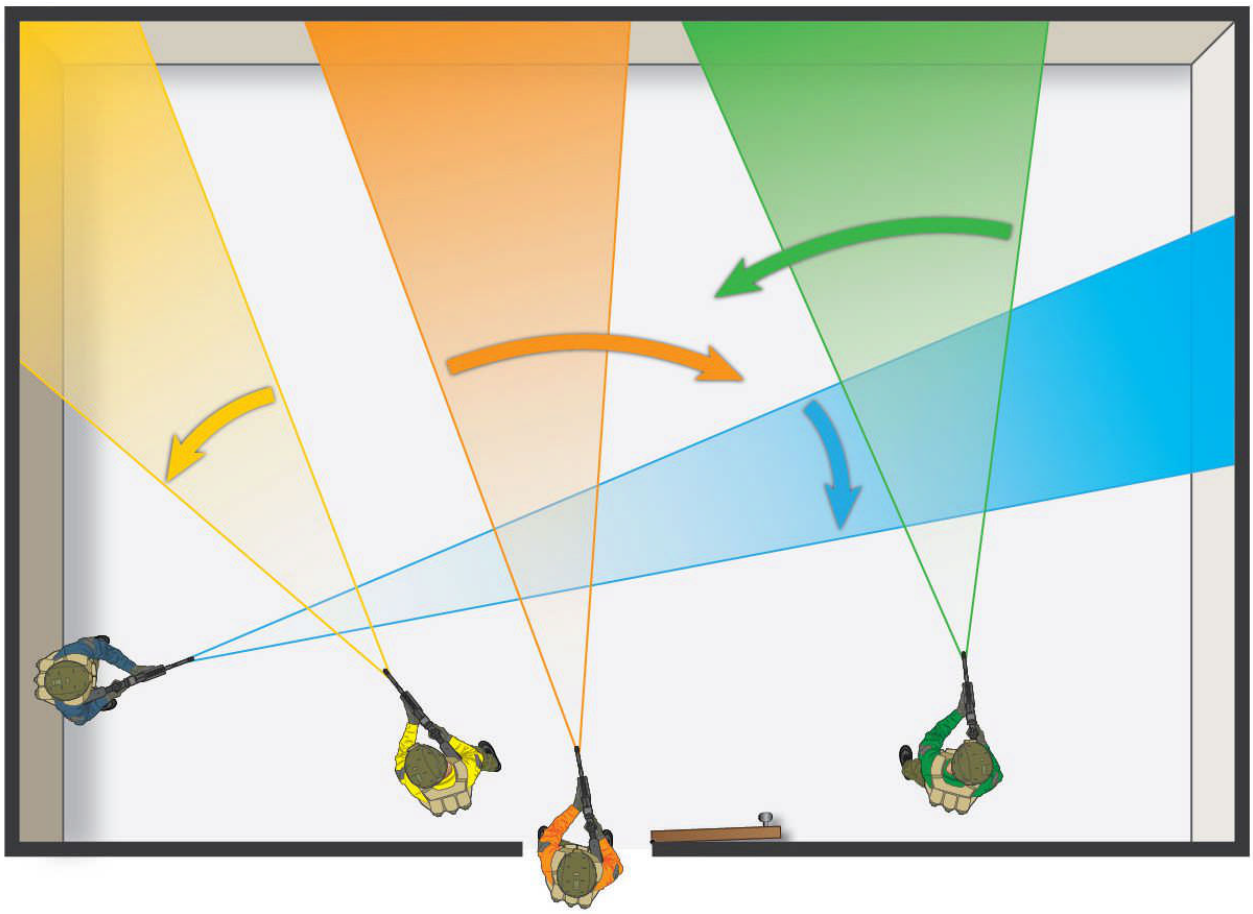
Once again, while each team member's actions were explained individually above, in real execution all team members will move simultaneously and enter the room as quickly as possible, one behind the other. It is optimal to have as little gap as possible between team members as they enter the room since a gap in the entry process can leave sectors momentarily uncovered. Viewed as a complete sequence, the lead team member will clear the immediate area, turn to clear one of the two corners and start scanning inward while moving to the domination point. The second team member will be right behind the lead team member and move in the opposite direction of the lead team member, covering the lead team member's back and clearing the opposite corner.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## COMPLETE SEQUENCE 2 – Third and Fourth Enter

As the first two team members move to their domination points, the third and fourth team members will enter right behind, each moving in the opposite direction of the team member in front and clearing the center of the room. The third and fourth team members will move to domination points just inside the door.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

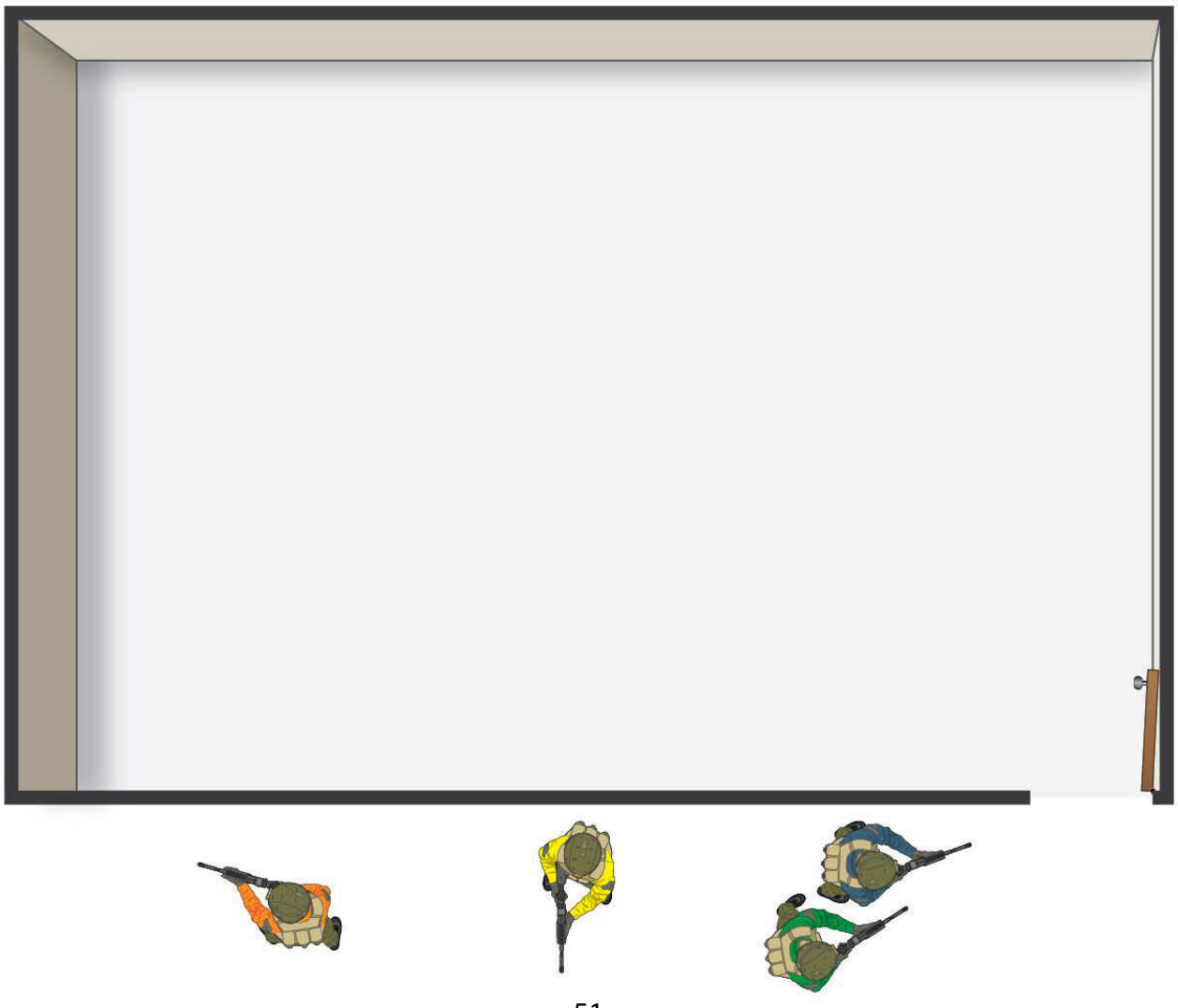
## COMPLETE SEQUENCE 3 – Scan and Cover the Rear

As all team members scan their sectors, it is also important that they look up to check for threats hiding in the ceiling. The third or fourth team member will check behind the door. The third or fourth team member will also turn to provide rear security for the team while remaining inside the room. As shown in the diagram below, once all team members are at their domination points, they will be in a "shallow horseshoe " configuration. It is important that the team is positioned in this way. If they simply line up along the wall (sometimes known as a "strong wall" technique) the first two team members will not have as good angles of observation behind furniture in the room. On the other hand, if team members penetrate too deep into the room they run the risk of being accidentally shot by a fellow team member.

# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## Team Member Positioning

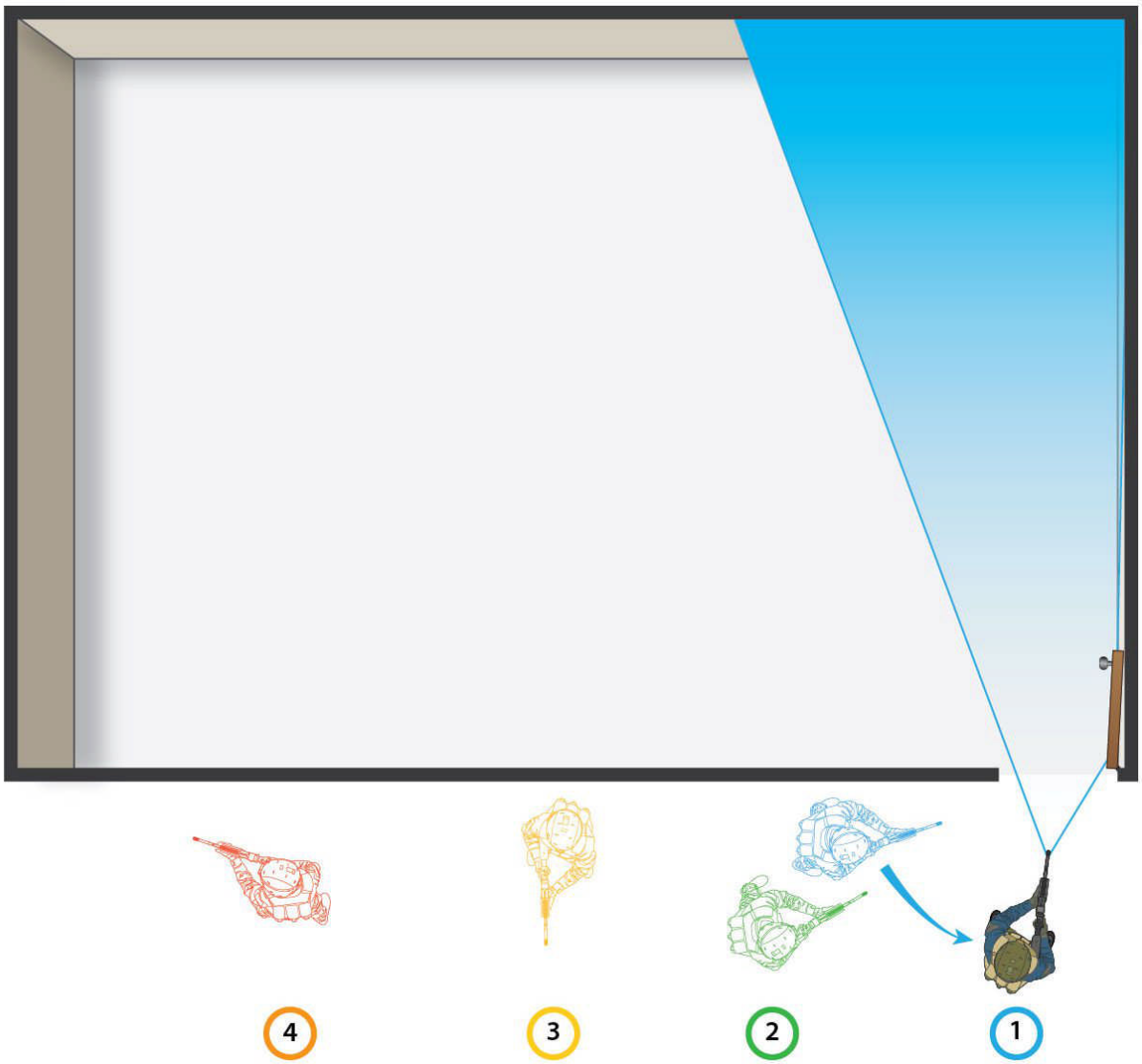
A corner-fed room is a room where the door is flush with the corner of the room, allowing a team member to turn only one direction when entering the room. Entering through a corner-fed, open door is similar to entering through a center-fed door but there are several changes to the procedure. The team will stack using one of the methods already discussed. Once again, the loose stack is preferred to maximize safety. As with the previous instruction on center-fed rooms, the following pages show the movements of each team member individually. However, when actually conducting the entry, all team members will enter the room together with as little space between team members as possible.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CORNER-FED ROOM

## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 1 – Clear the Doorway

The lead team member will step outward slightly to have a better angle of vision into the room while ensuring that the doorway is clear. The lead team member will take the opportunity to engage any deep threats in the room before crossing the threshold.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CORNER-FED ROOM

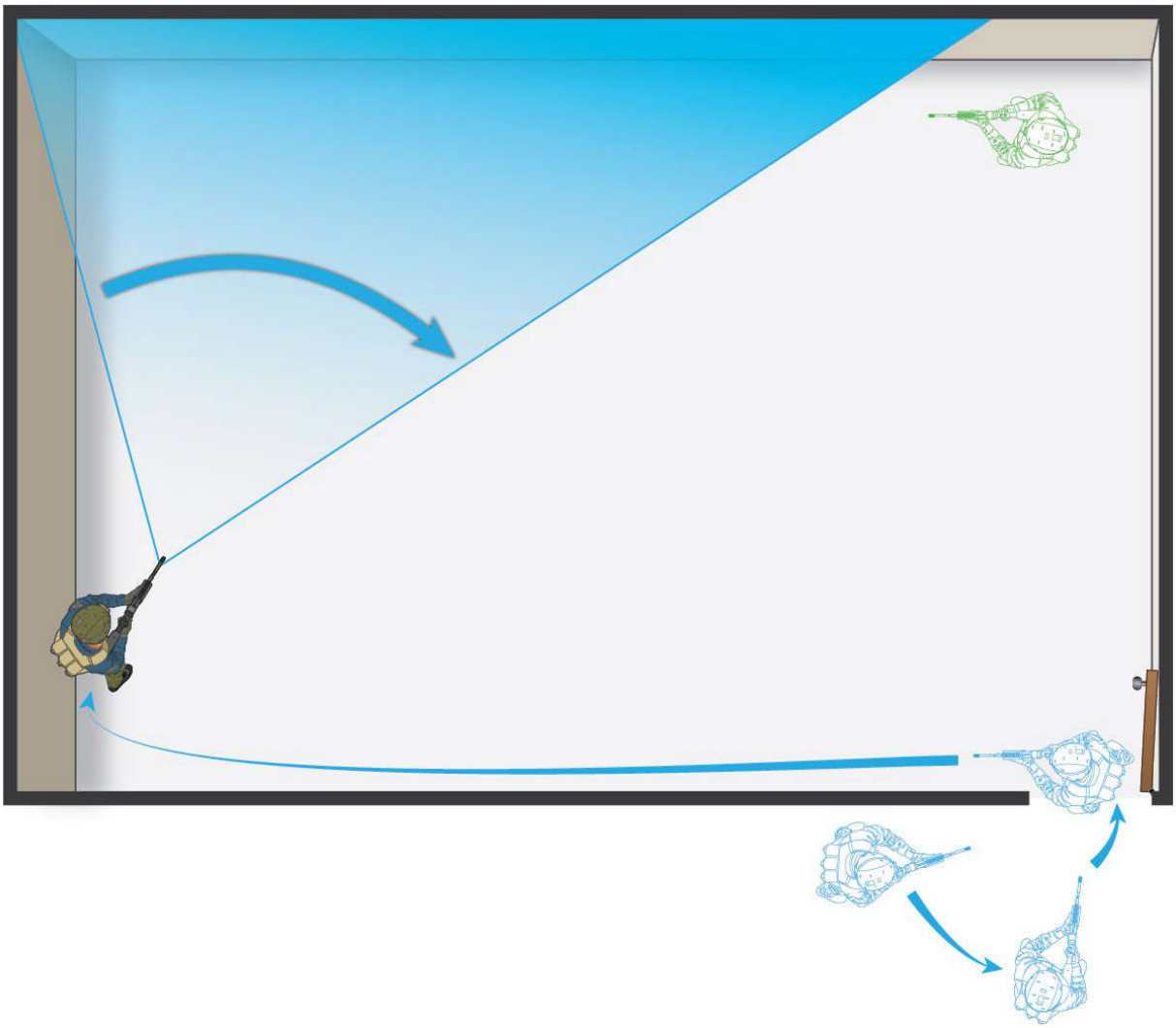
## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 2 – Clear the Corner

Clearing the doorway from outside the room will allow the lead team member to turn immediately to the corner once inside the room. While the lead team member can move in either direction when entering, in general the lead team member should turn to address the unknown corner first since he/she has already cleared the corner to the front from outside the room. Once the lead team member makes the turn, he/she will engage any threats in the corner until they are neutralized.

# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CORNER-FED ROOM

## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 3 – Move to Domination Point

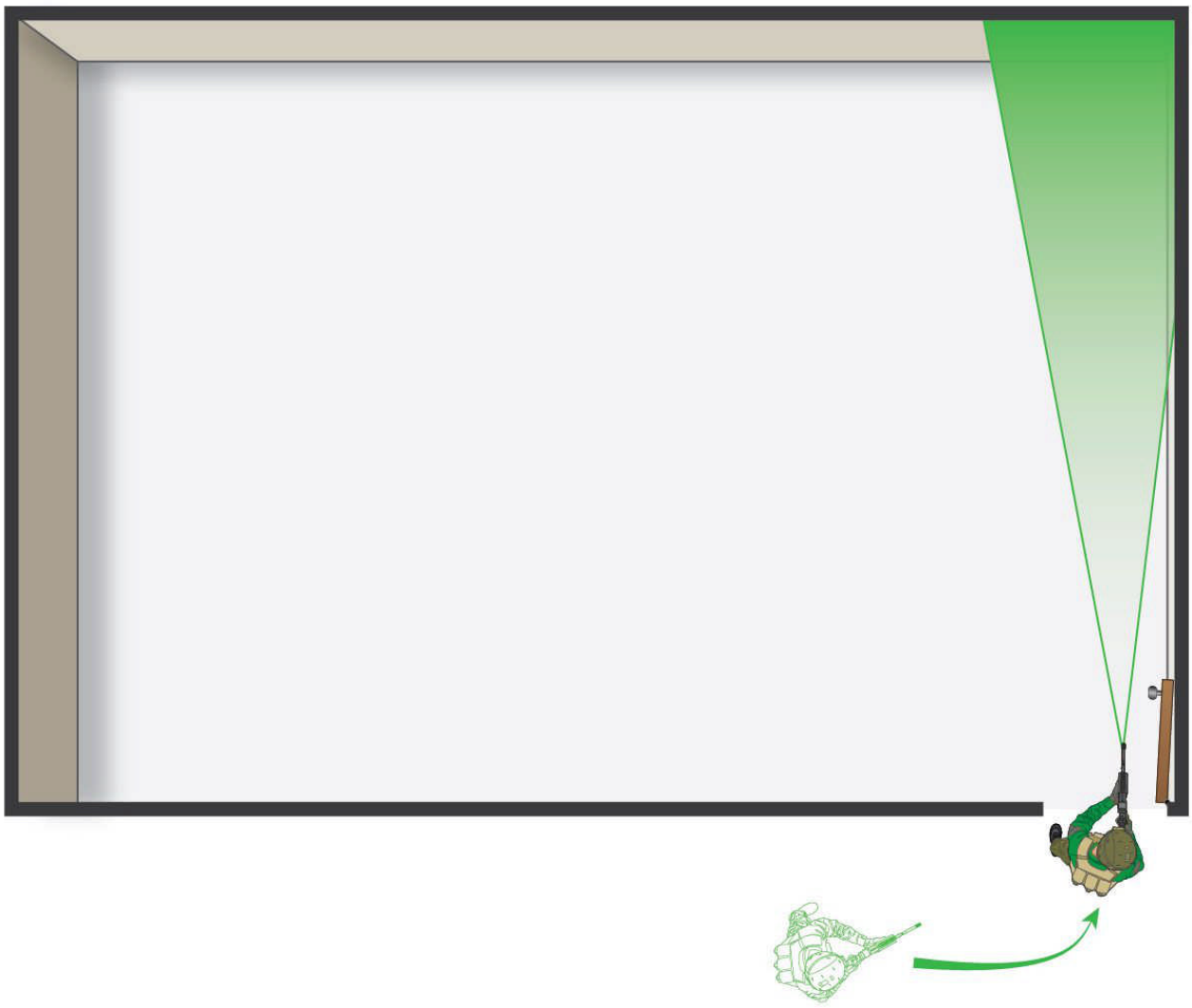
Once the corner is clear, the lead team member should not stay focused on the corner but should instead immediately begin to scan inward while moving along the wall. The team member continues to scan and move towards his/her domination point. The domination point (depicted below) is slightly forward of the corner. The lead team member will continue to scan inward until the scan reaches a point three feet off the second team member's point of domination. At this point the lead team member will scan back and forth across his/her full sector several times to ensure the sector is clear and to identify potential danger areas. Experienced teams can shorten this deliberate scanning process and might also break each team member's sector into primary and secondary sectors.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CORNER-FED ROOM

## SECOND TEAM MEMBER STEP 1 – Clear the Corner

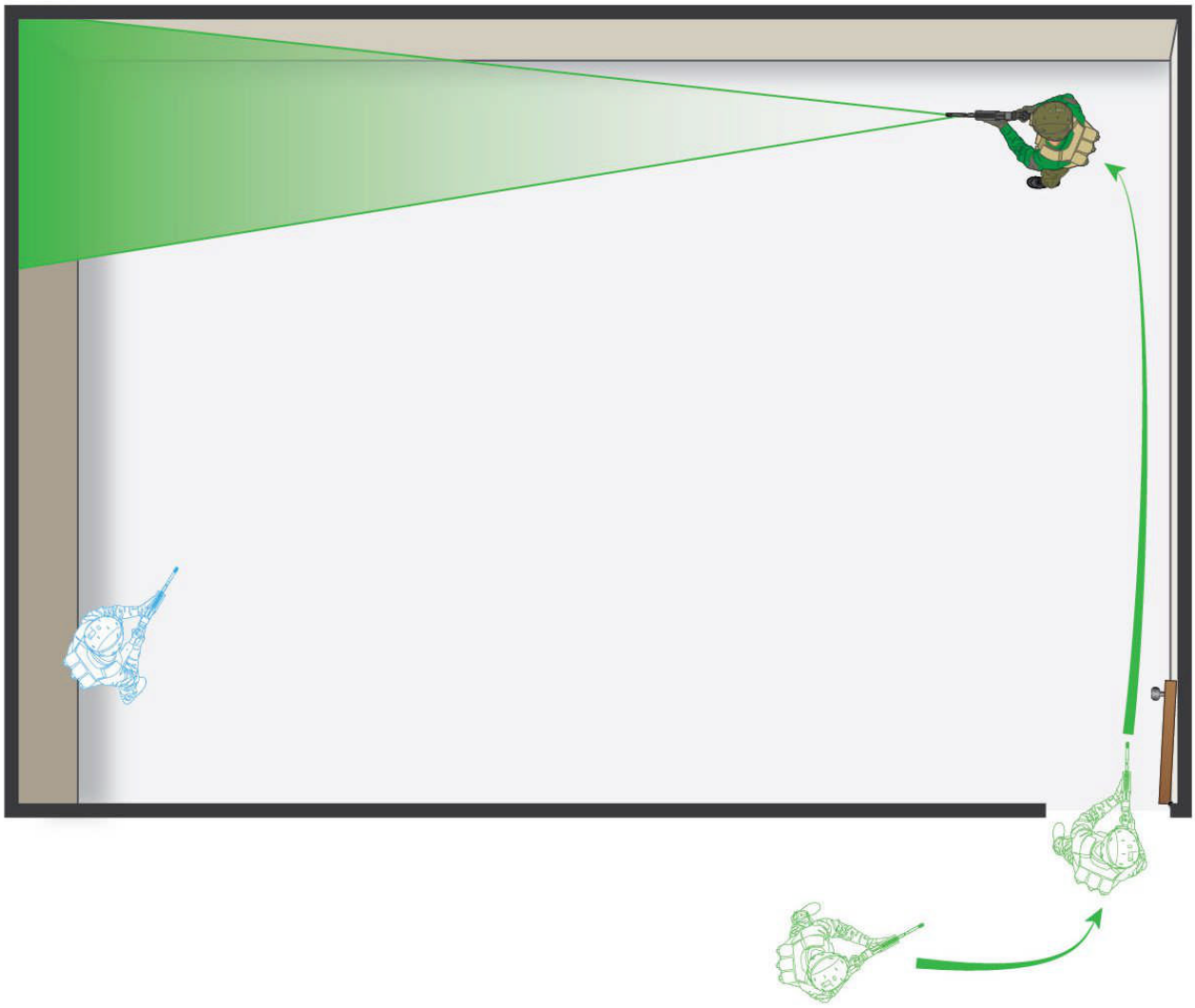
The second team member will move in the opposite direction of the lead team member. It is also critical that the second team member enter the room as close as possible behind the lead team member. This is to ensure the lead team member's back is not left exposed.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CORNER-FED ROOM

## SECOND TEAM MEMBER STEP 2 – Move to Domination Point

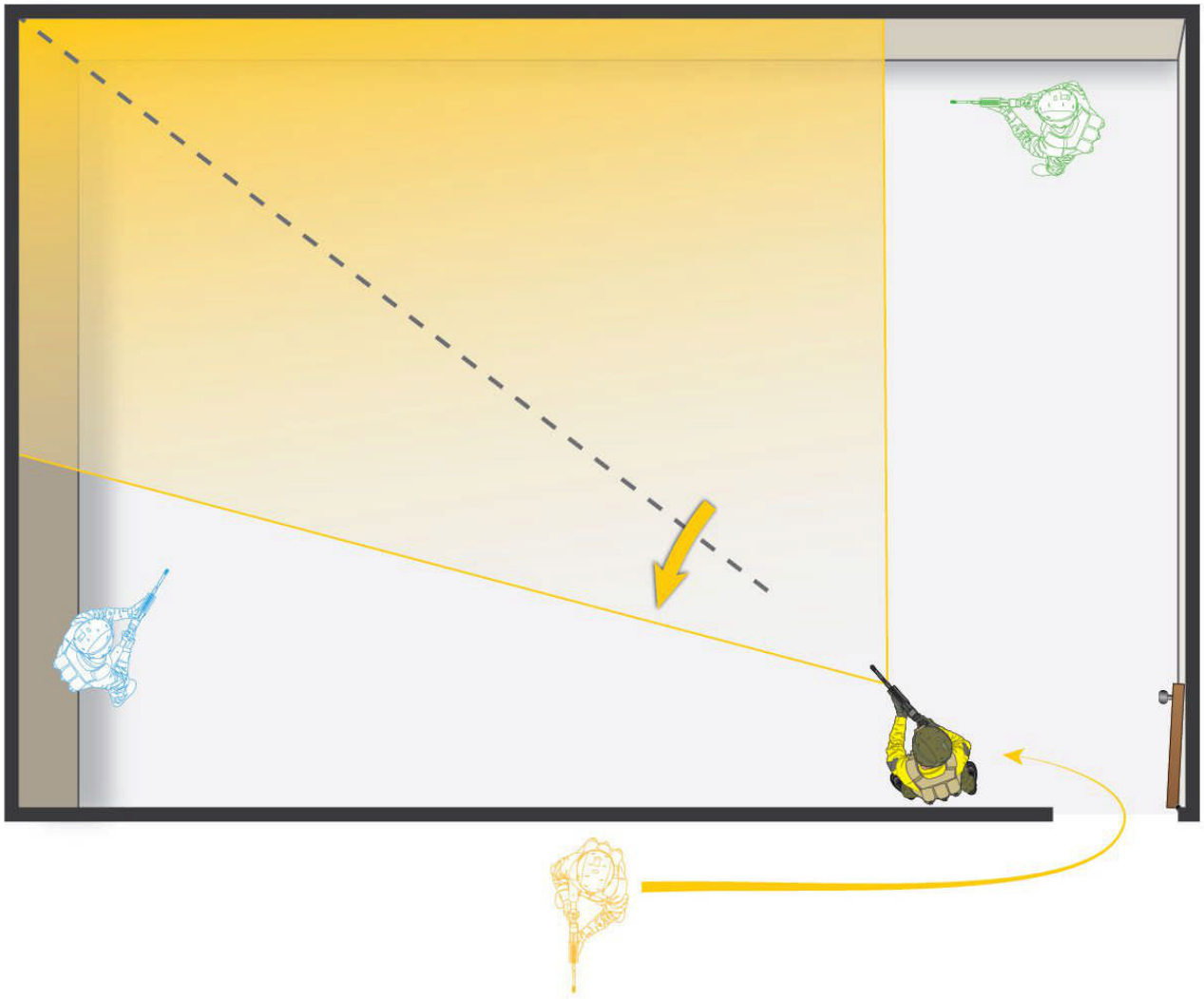
Once the corner is clear, the second team member should not stay focused on the corner but should instead immediately begin to scan inward while moving along the wall. The team member continues to scan and move towards his/her domination point. The domination point (depicted below) is slightly forward of the corner. The second team member will continue to scan inward until the scan reaches a point three feet off the lead team member's point of domination. At this point the second team member will scan back and forth across his/her full sector several times to ensure the sector is clear and to identify potential danger areas.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CORNER-FED ROOM

## THIRD TEAM MEMBER – Clear the Center and Scan

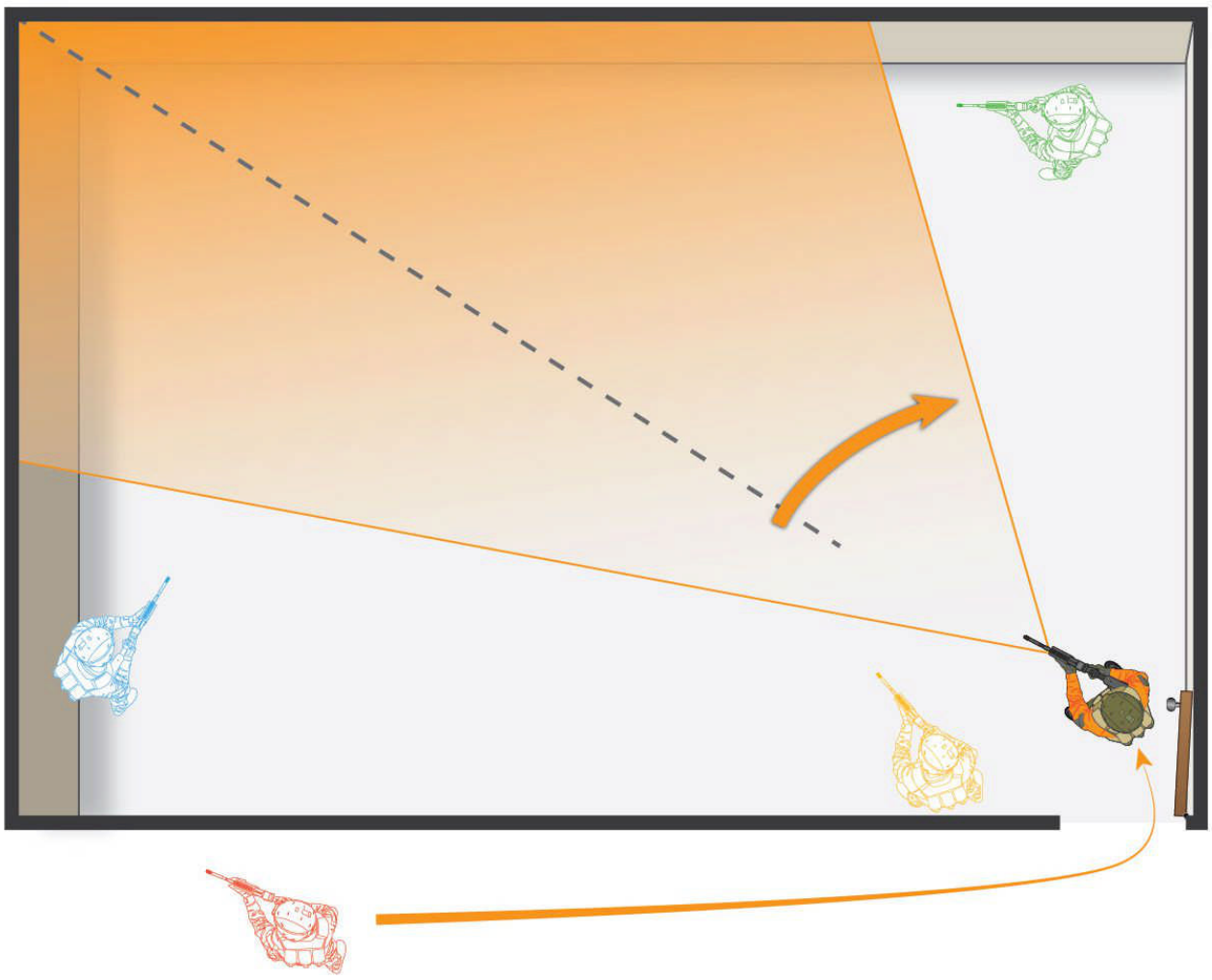
The third team member will enter the room, moving in the opposite direction of the second team member. Once again, the rule is "move in the opposite direction of the person in front of you." As the third team member enters the room, he/she will identify the center of the room (marked with the dashed gray line in the picture below) and start to scan in the direction of movement. The third team member should also start the scan slightly behind the center point of the room. While scanning, the third team member will move to a domination point to the side of the door.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CORNER-FED ROOM

## FOURTH TEAM MEMBER STEP 1 – Clear the Center and Scan

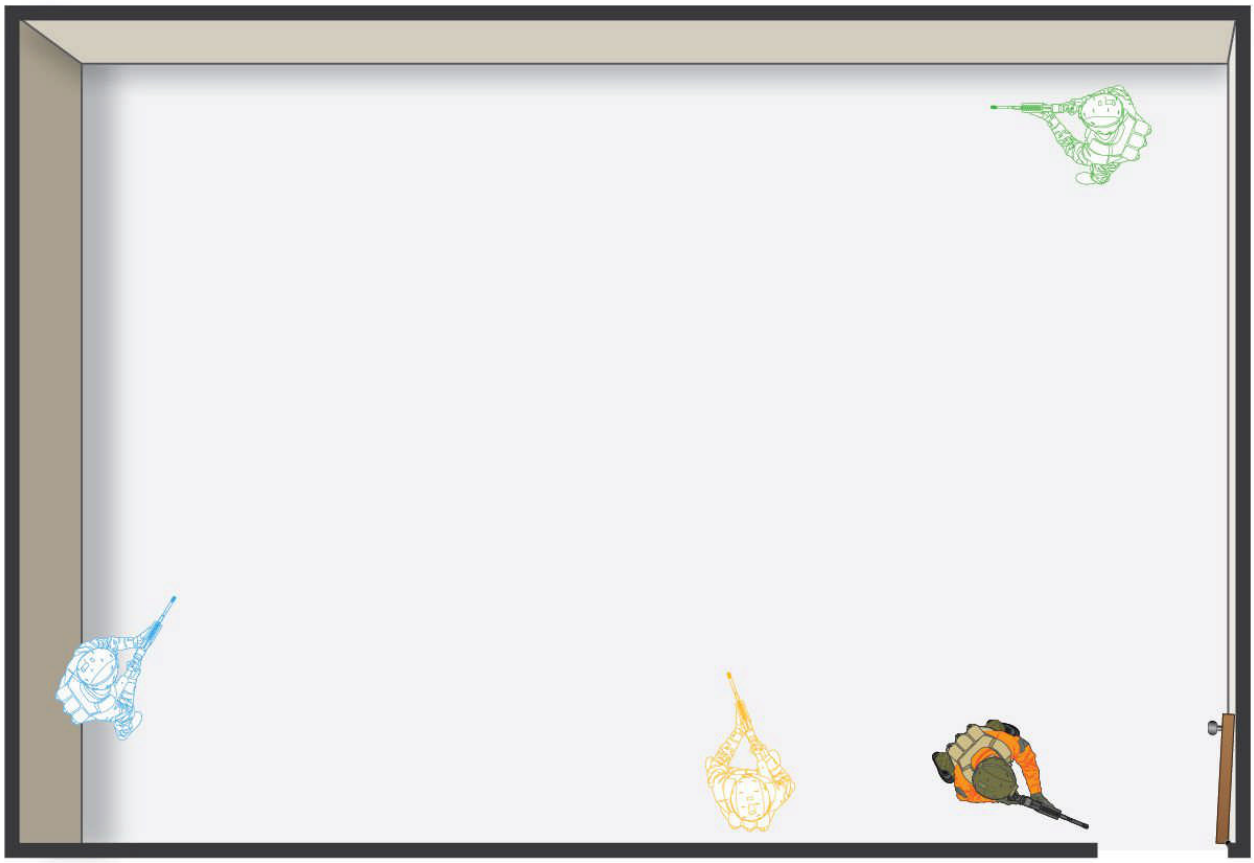
The fourth team member will enter the room, moving in the opposite direction of the third team member. As the fourth team member enters the room, he/she will identify the center of the room and start to scan in the direction of movement. The fourth team member should also start the scan slightly behind the center point of the room. While scanning, the fourth team member will move to a domination point to the side of the door.



# IMMEDIATE ENTRY: CORNER-FED ROOM

## FOURTH TEAM MEMBER STEP 2 – Check Door, Cover Rear

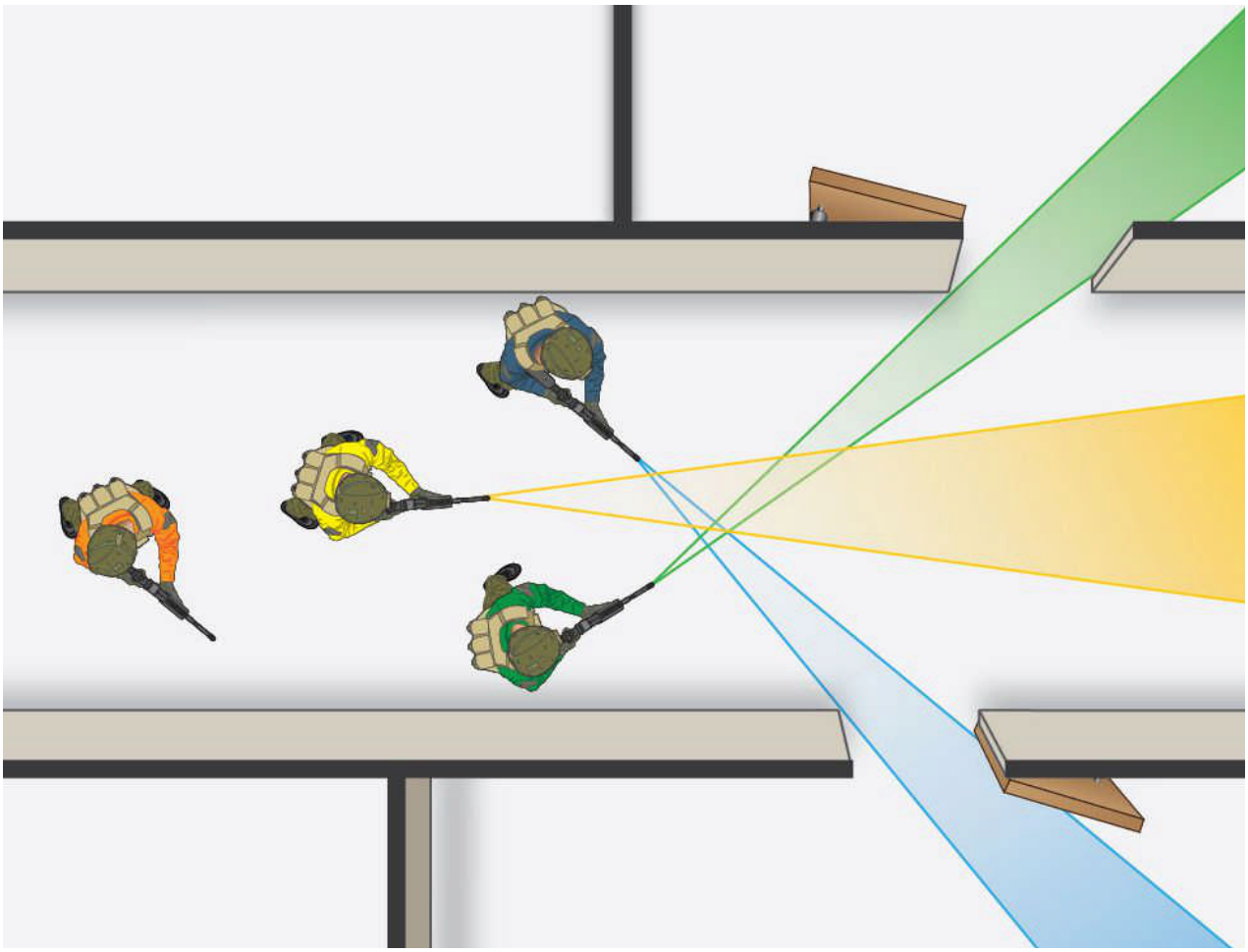
Once the fourth team member finishes clearing his/her sector, the fourth team member will turn quickly to check that no one is hiding behind the door. After checking behind the door, the fourth team member will turn around to provide rear security for the team from inside the room. Depending on the room/door configuration, the third team member may be the one who checks the door or turns to provide rear security.



# HALLWAY MOVEMENT

## Cross Coverage

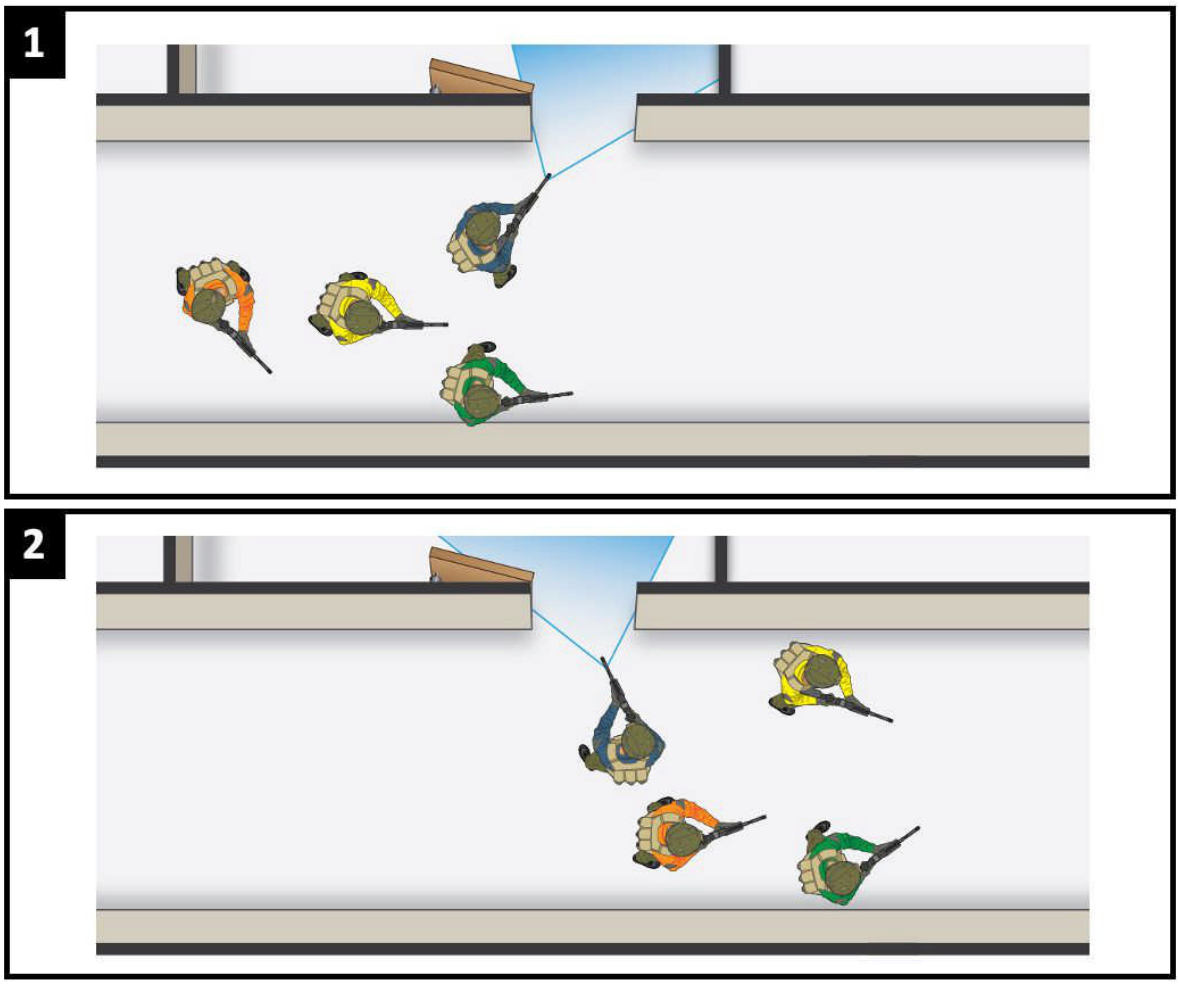
When a team moves down a hallway, the lead two team members will position themselves even with each other on each side of the hallway. They will provide “cross coverage” which means that the team member on the right will cover to the left and the team member on the left will cover to the right. This is because team members have a better angle of observation through doors and openings across the hall than they do on the same side of the hall. If the hall is wide enough, the third team member can stand between the lead team members and provide cover to the front. Additional team members will provide rear security. The formation ends up taking the shape of a “shallow-Y.” In narrow hallways, there might not be room for the third team member to cover the front. In extremely narrow hallways there might not even be enough room for cross coverage. In these cases, team members should just stagger their formation and cover the front and rear.



# HALLWAY MOVEMENT

## Moving Past Doors or Intersections – Clear and Hold

As the team approaches an open door, the two lead team members will maintain cross coverage until they reach the door. On the approach, the team member across the hall will have the best angle of vision through the open door. However, this team member will have to momentarily give up cross coverage as the team reaches the door. The lead team member on the same side as the door will quickly turn and provide coverage as the team passes. The covering team member can adjust as needed to achieve the best angle to cover the team and minimize exposure. Once the last team member passes the covering team member, the last team member will squeeze the covering team member and call out "last man." At this point the covering team member will fall into the rear of the formation. The process is the same for passing two opposing open doors or corners in a hallway intersection, except both lead team members will hold and provide coverage as the team passes through.



# BASIC URBAN COMBAT
## Delayed Entry

For team operations, delayed entry is similar to immediate entry but the initial steps are different. Team members may choose to use delayed entry tactics when time is not critical or when extra caution is advisable. Delayed entry tactics are designed to allow team members to clear as much of a room or hallway as possible from the outside, before actually making entry.

It is important to note that the delayed and immediate entry techniques described in this manual are interchangeable. Therefore, team members can switch back and forth between delayed entry and immediate entry depending on the situation. For example, a team might begin to clear a building agressively, but have to switch to a more cautions, delayed-entry approach when they realize that the enemy has set boobytraps in the building.

When conducting a delayed entry, the majority of the team will remain away from the door and only one team member will move forward to conduct an initial sweep of the target room. This minimizes the exposure of the team as a whole. However, it is important that the lead team member not move too far away from the team to the point where all team members are not able to provide mutual support and casualty evacuation in an emergency.

The team member should conduct the sweep (sometimes called slicing-the-pie) in one, smooth movement. Once completing the initial sweep, the team member may conduct more sweeps as needed. In some situations, the room configuration or furniture might make it impossible to conduct a full sweep. In these cases the team member might conduct a half sweep or conduct the sweep with a shallower arc.

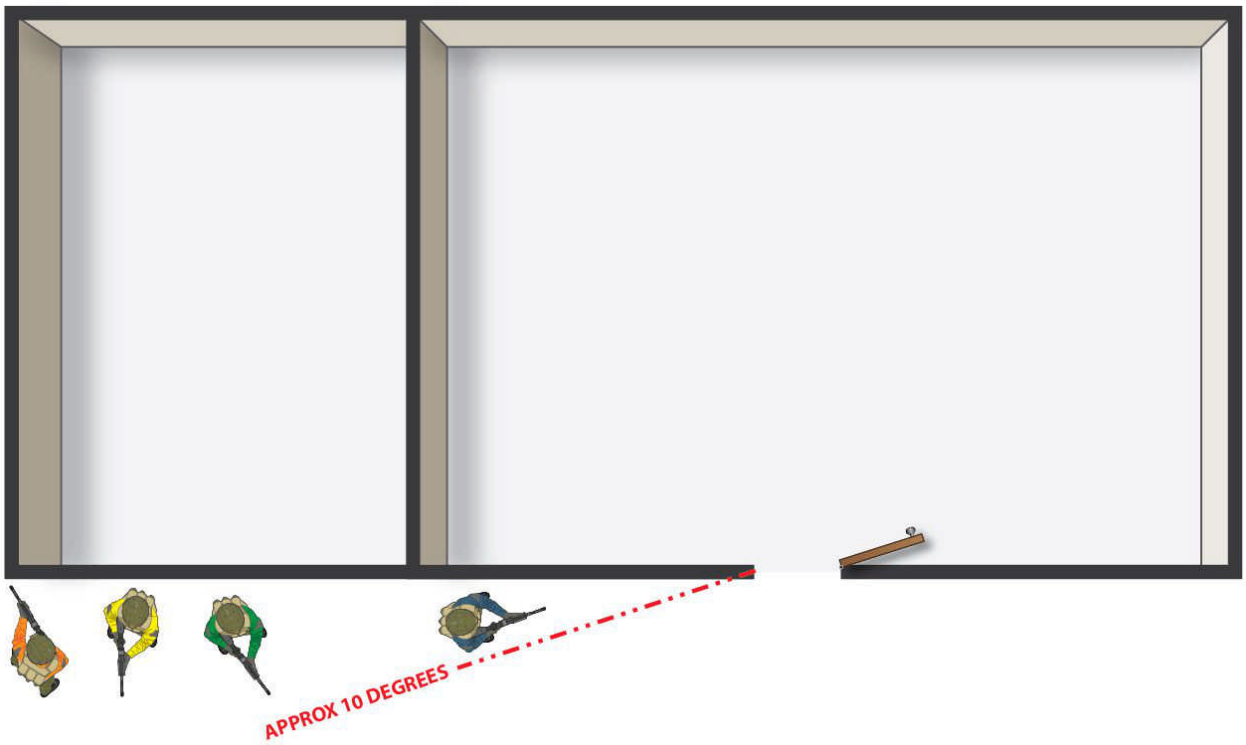
Once the lead team member has conducted a sweep of the room, he/she will lead the way during the entry process and the remaining team members will follow, clearing their respective sectors just as they did in the immediate entry process already described.

However, when conducting a delayed entry, the team might decide not to enter the room at all. If the lead team member detects a threat while conducting the sweep, the team migh remain outside and engage the threat using other methods described later such as tossing grenades through the door or firing machine guns through the walls. Of course, these types of indiscriminate techniques are only appropriate for high-intensity warfare.

# DELAYED ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 1 – Approach the Door

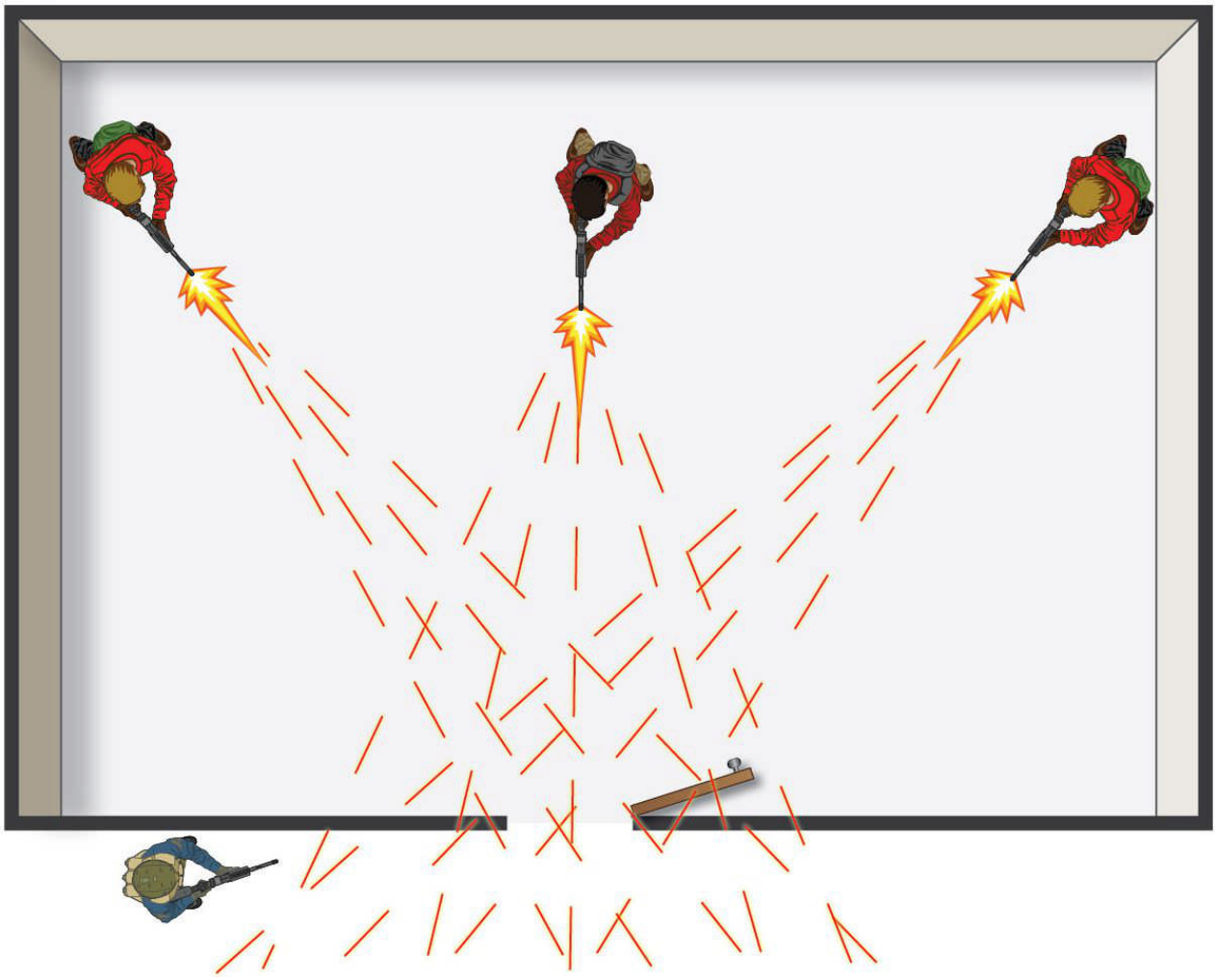
The lead team member approaches the open door from the outside of the room, positioned close to the wall, several meters from the doorway. The lead team member should avoid touching or bumping into the wall because doing so will make noise and might also increase the chances of getting shot, since bullets tend to travel along walls.



# DELAYED ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 2 – Avoid Indiscriminate Fire

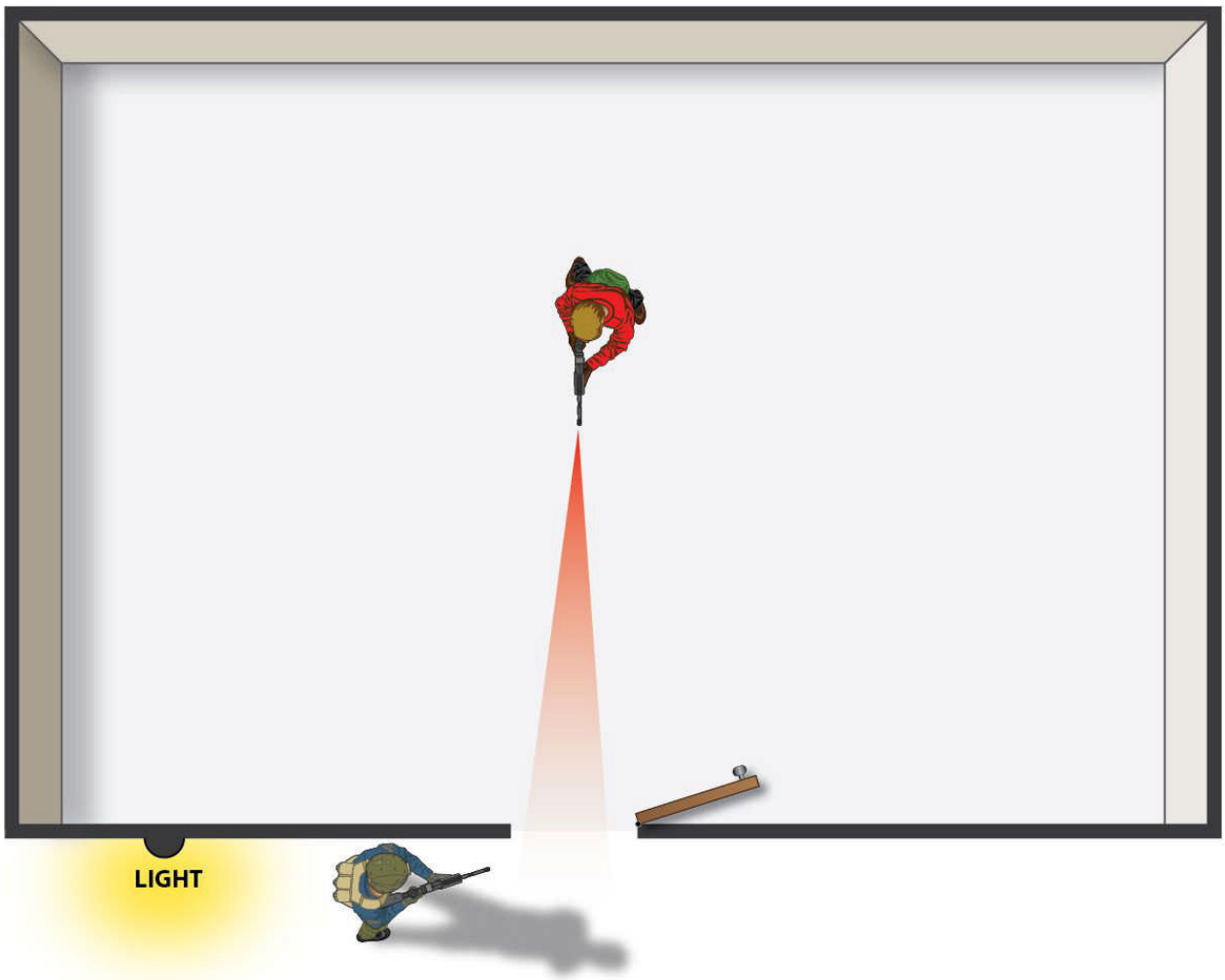
Staying away from the doorway is also important. Many enemies, especially terrorists with automatic weapons, will not fire single, aimed shots but will rather spray bullets indiscriminately in the direction of any noise or potential threat. This spray of bullets will generally form an arc several meters wide. If the lead team member stays close to a door, he/she might get hit with a barrage of bullets coming through the doorway and the walls surrounding the doorway. Remember that most interior walls are not bulletproof and the chances of getting shot through a wall are very high. By staying a few meters back from the door, team members minimize the chances of getting hit by indiscriminate fire.



# DELAYED ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 3 – Watch for Exposed Shadow

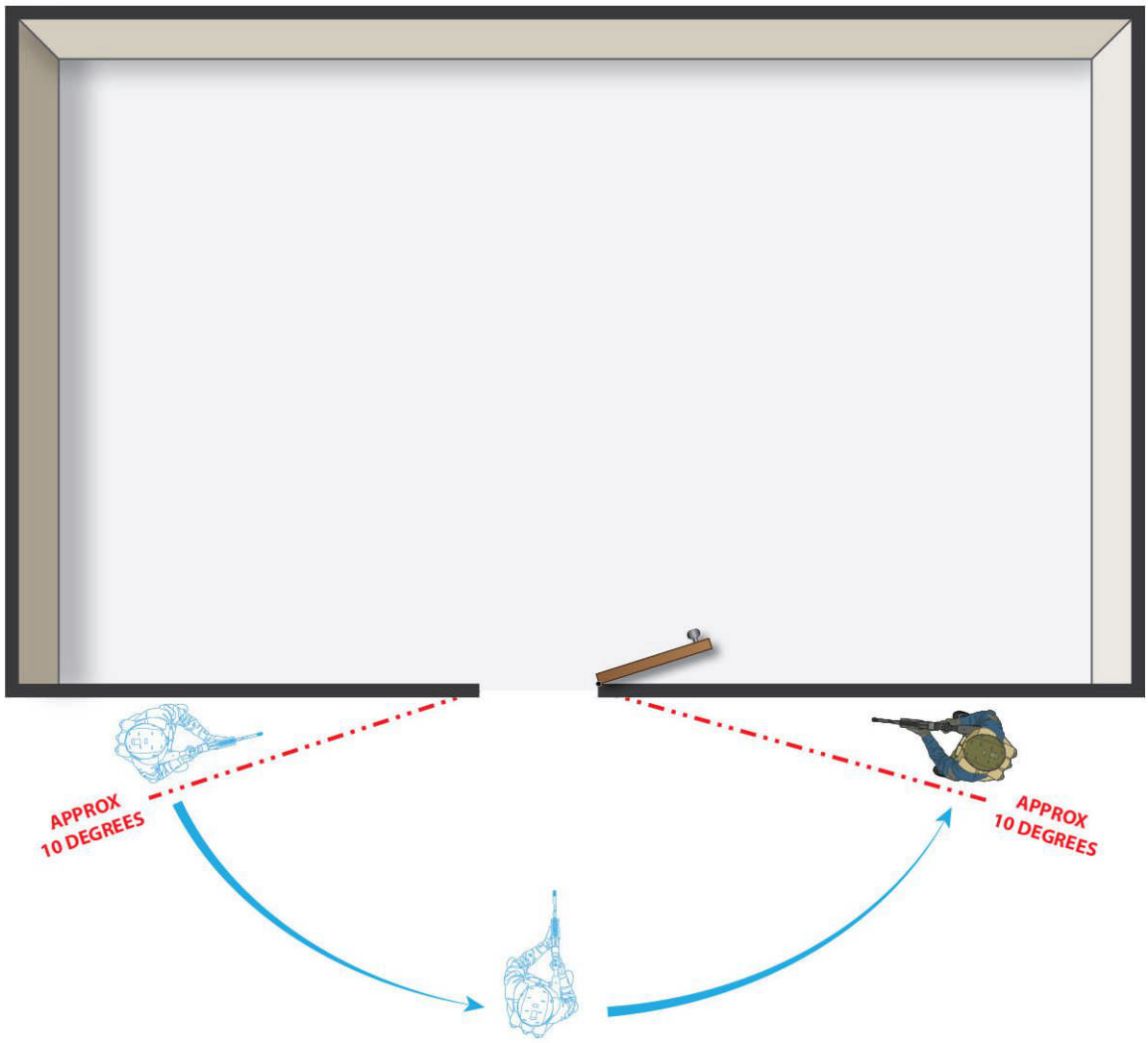
Staying back from the door also helps minimize the chances of detection, especially in terms of shadows created by interior lights. Most buildings have multiple light sources in each room or hallway. This means that when team members come close to an open door, someone standing inside the room can most likely see the shadow moving across the floor behind the opening. Team members should keep their distance from the door and try to remain aware of their shadows as they move.



# DELAYED ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 4 – Conduct "Sweep"

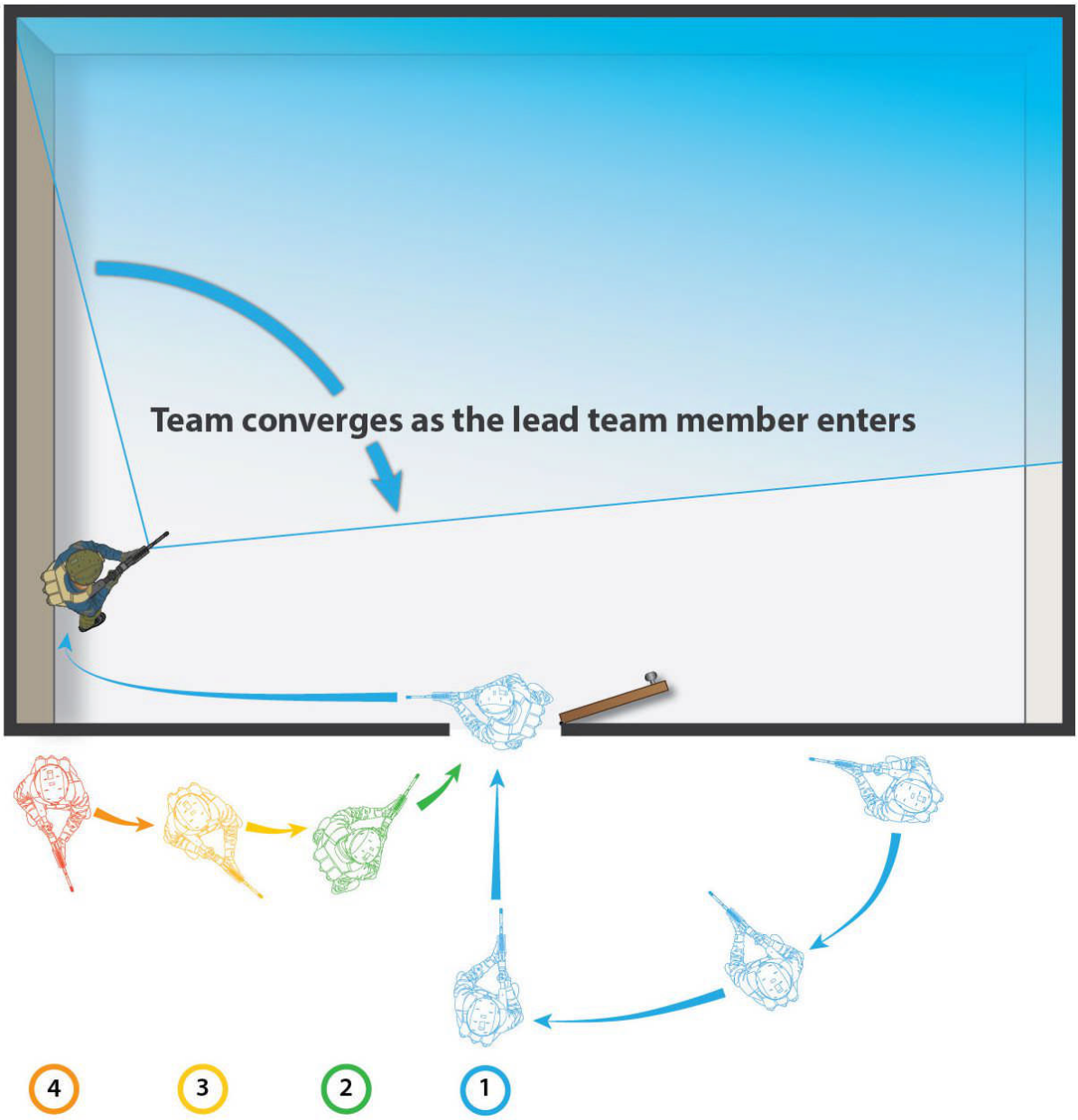
Next, the lead team member will sweep out in a wide arc, keeping his/her weapon focused on the doorway and moving all the way across to a position close to the wall on the opposite side of the door. The purpose of the sweep is to visually clear the room as quickly as possible to identify any threats inside and possibly draw those threats out of the room. When executing the sweep, team members should move in an arc as fast as possible while keeping the weapon relatively steady and taking care not to trip. It is sometimes necessary to sacrifice some weapon accuracy in order to minimize exposure and vulnerability through speed. Moving quickly along the arc makes it difficult for an enemy to engage effectively and will leave team members exposed for only a fraction of a second. After completing the initial sweep, the lead team member can conduct additional sweeps if needed to check the room more carefully.



# DELAYED ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## LEAD TEAM MEMBER STEP 5 – Reverse Sweep and Entry

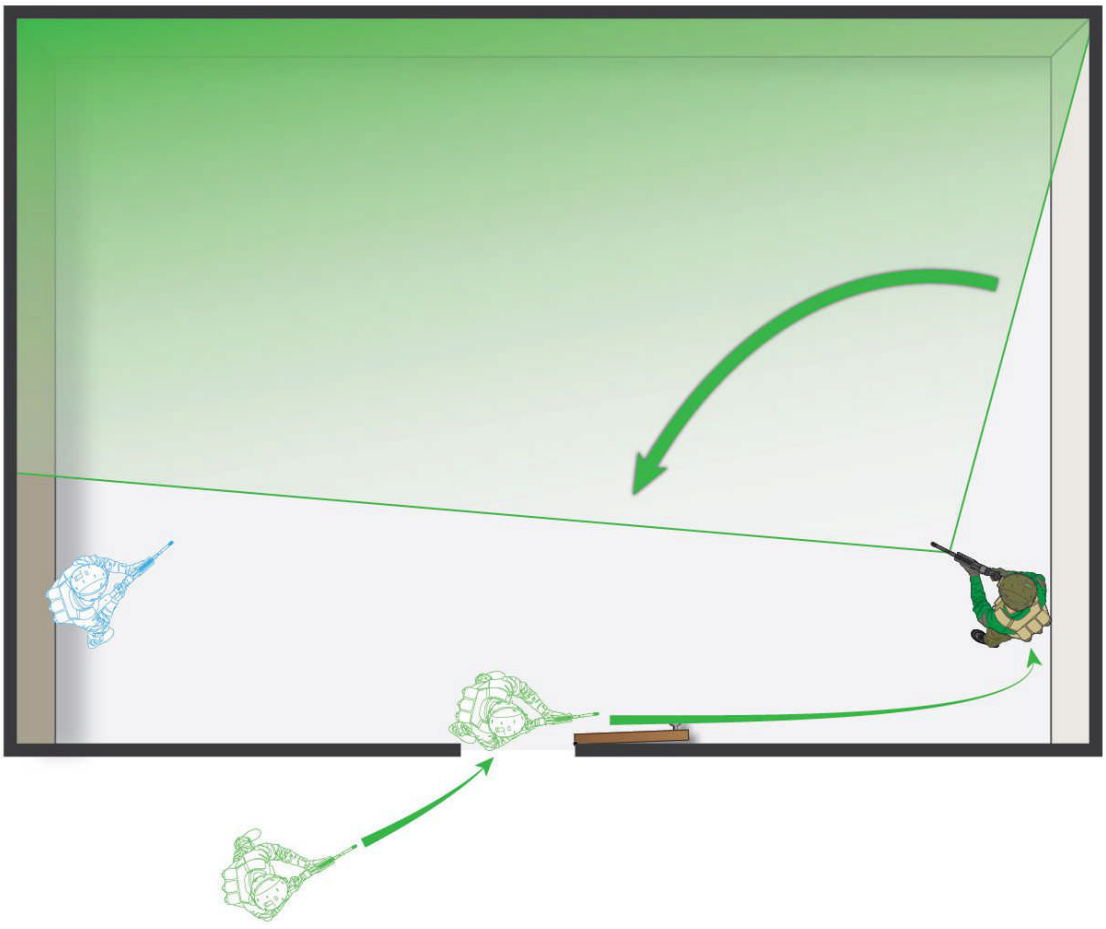
Once completing the initial sweep, if the team decides to enter the room, the lead team member will sweep along the arc in the opposite direction until facing the door. The lead team member will then move towards the door remaining alert for deep threats in the center of the room. Once reaching the threshold, the lead team member then clears the corner and scans inward while moving to the domination point.



# DELAYED ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## SECOND TEAM MEMBER – Clear the Corner and Dominate

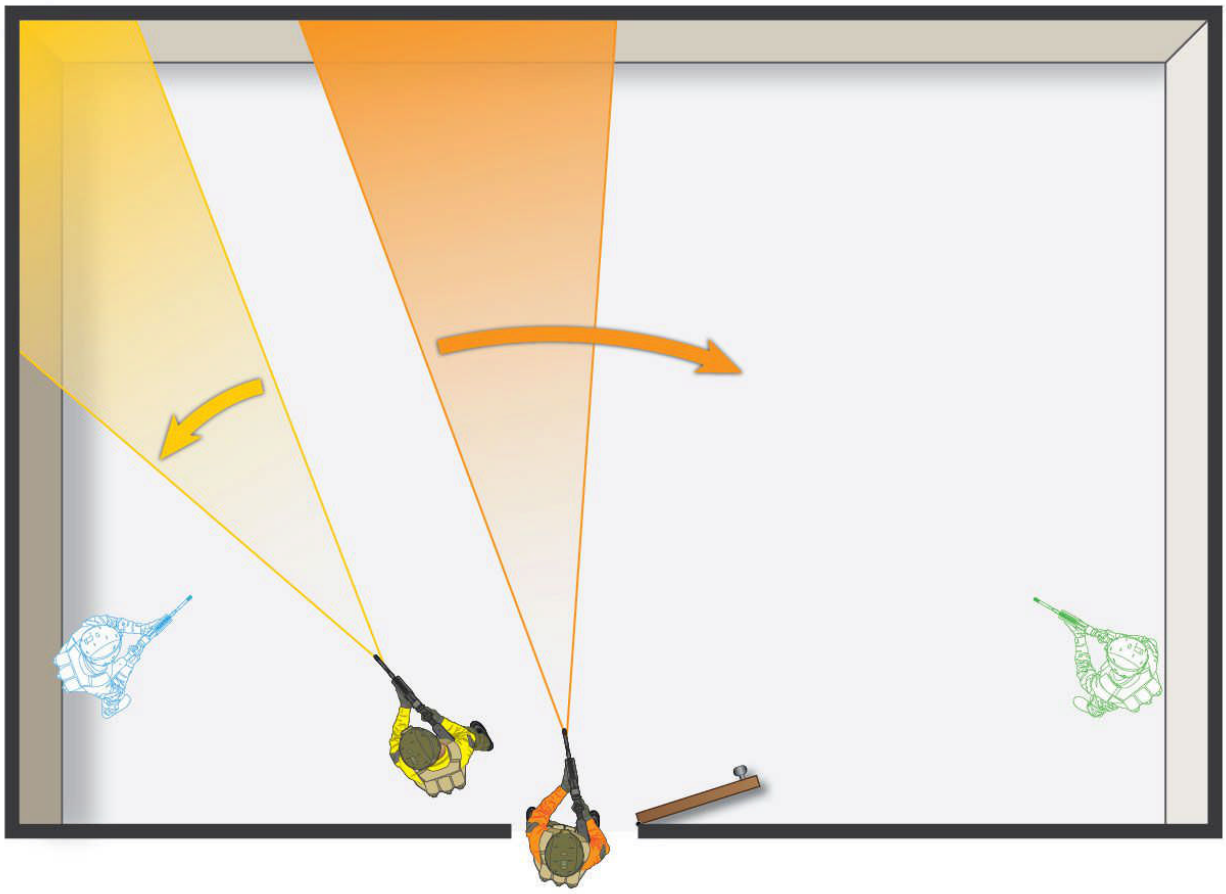
The second team member will initially keep some distance from the door along with the rest of the team and allow the lead team member time and space to conduct the initial sweep. If the team decides to enter the room, the second team member will wait until the lead team member completes the reverse sweep and is moving head-on towards the door. At this point, the second team member will also begin to approach the door, timing his/her entry to cover the lead team member's back. Upon reaching the door, the second team member will turn in the opposite direction of the lead team member. The second team member will have to choose a good approach angle and use good timing in order to enter the room as close as possible behind the lead team member. There is no universal formula for how to do this. It just takes practice and situational awareness. Once the second team member enters the room and makes the turn, he/she will clear the corner and engage any threats in the corner until they are neutralized. The second team member will then scan inward and move to the domination point just as in the immediate entry technique.



# DELAYED ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## THIRD AND FOURTH TEAM MEMBERS – Enter and Clear

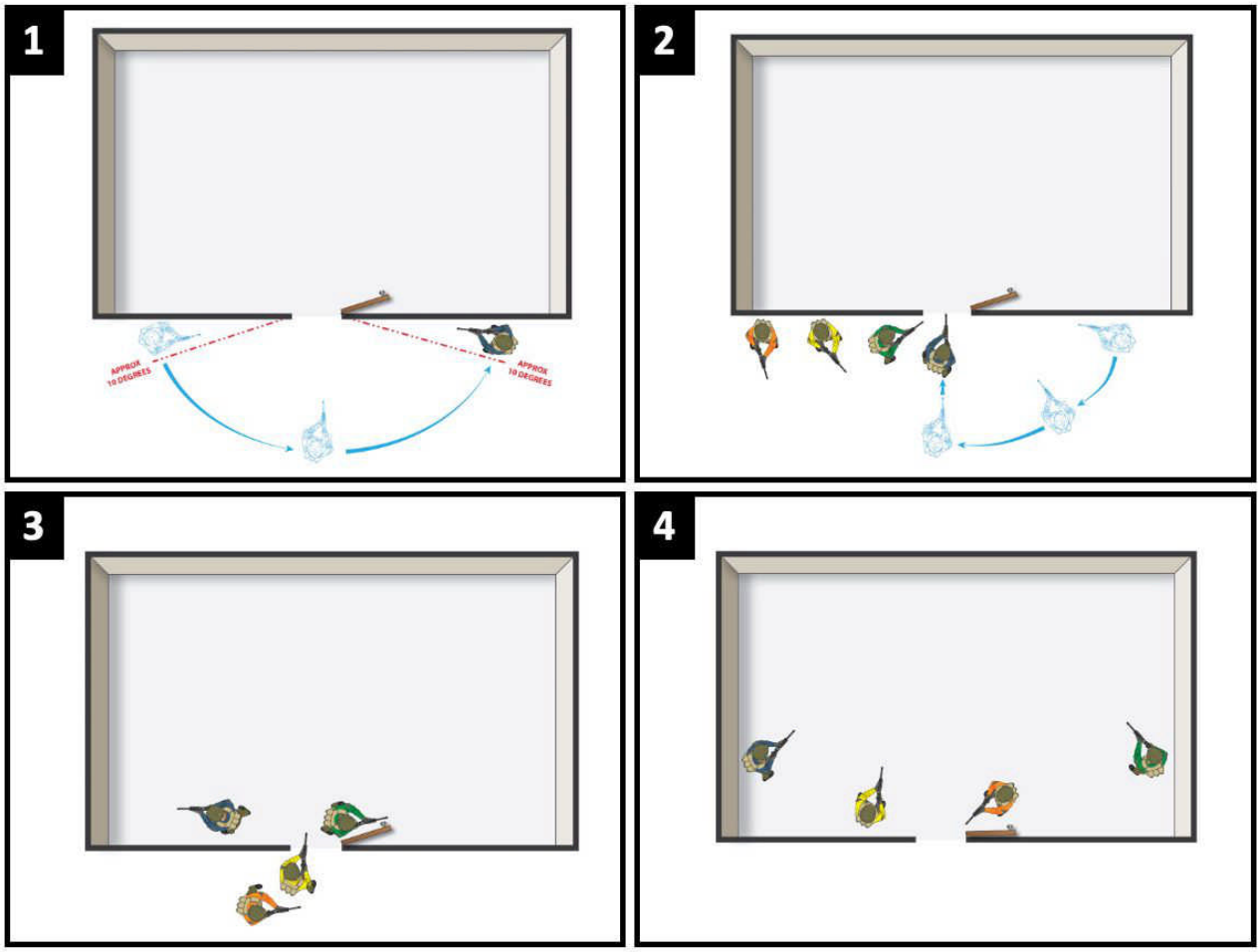
The procedures for the third and fourth team members in delayed entry are no different from immediate entry. The third and fourth team members will follow close behind the second team member. As the first two team members move to their domination points, the third and fourth team members will enter right behind, each moving in the opposite direction of the team member in front and clearing the center of the room. The third and fourth team members will move to domination points just inside the door. Either the third or fourth team member will check behind the door. The third or fourth team member will also turn to provide rear security for the team while remaining inside the room. As shown in the sector diagram below, once all team members are at their domination points, they will be in a "shallow horseshoe" configuration.



# DELAYED ENTRY: CENTER-FED ROOM

## COMPLETE SEQUENCE

For team operations, delayed entry is similar to immediate entry but the initial steps are different. The majority of the team will remain away from the door and only the lead team member will move forward to conduct an initial sweep of the target room. Once the sweep is complete, the lead team member will move back in the opposite direction and then move straight towards the door. At this point the second team member will begin to move towards the door to enter the room right behind the lead team member. The remaining team members will also move towards the door to follow behind into the room with as little gap between team members as possible. This section covers executing a delayed entry on a center-fed door. The procedures for a corner-fed door are almost identical, except the lead team member might not need to sweep around as far to clear the inside of the room.



# HIGH-INTENSITY URBAN COMBAT
## Exterior Movement

The most critical question when moving in the street or between buildings is whether the team/squad is under fire or not under fire. If the team is not under fire, it can move down the street in a staggered file formation with weapons hanging or at the ready. If team members take hostile fire, they must employ more deliberate maneuver in order to minimize exposure and address the threat.

When moving under fire, teams must strive to always have one element that is moving and another element providing cover. Team members should avoid trying to move and shoot at the same time while exposed in the street without cover or concealment. Instead of trying to move and shoot at the same time, team members should sprint as quickly as possible to the next covered position and then return fire from a more stable firing platform.

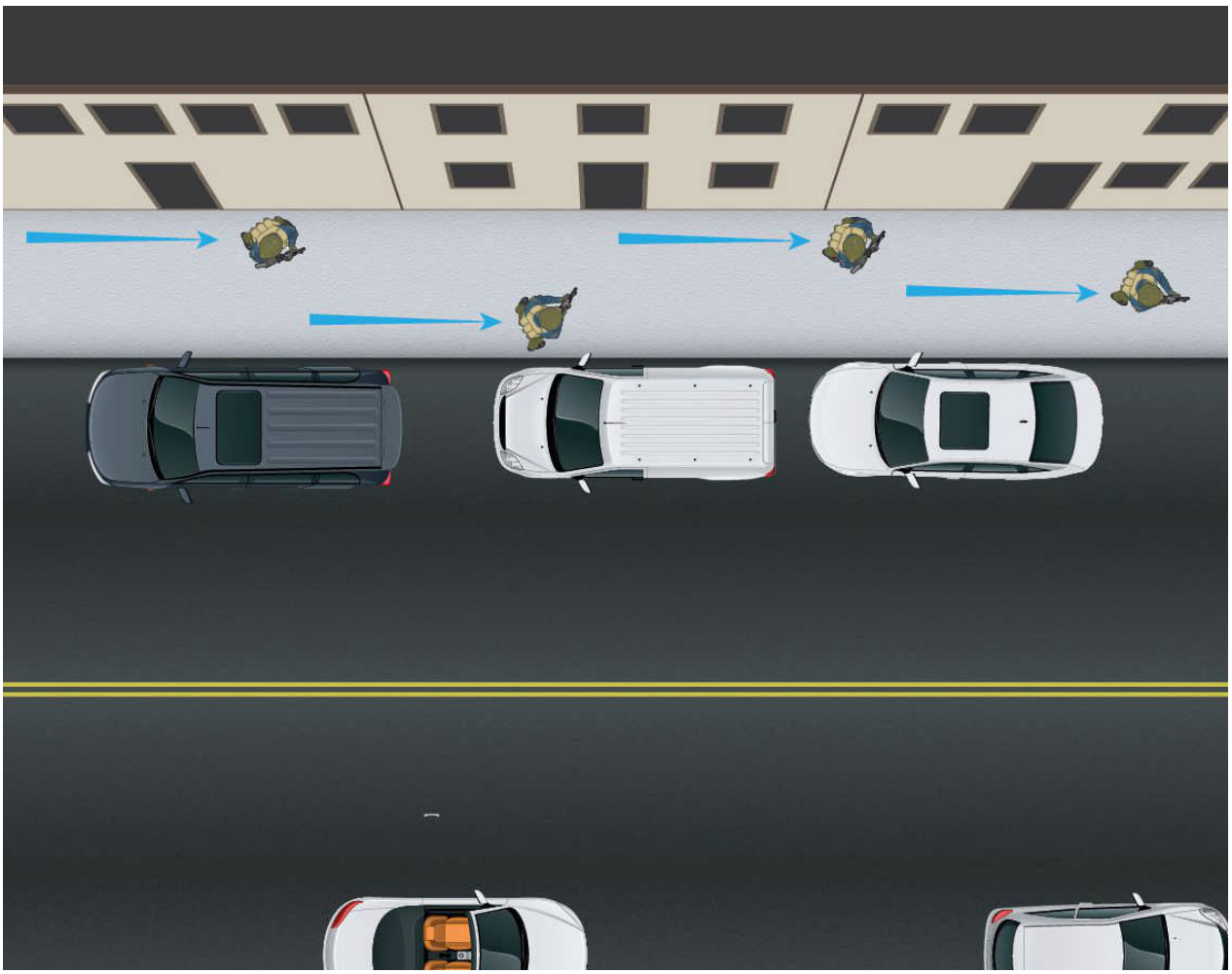
When fighting in the street, team members should always take maximum advantage of cover and concealment. This is the single most important factor that can improve a team member's chances of survival. Team members should take cover behind solid walls or cars. When using cars for cover, team members should position themselves behind the engine block and wheel well for maximum protection. If team members do not take advantage of the protection provided by a car's wheels, bullets can skip under the chassis of a car and hit crouching team members in the legs. Even a curb can provide limited protection against bullets.

The best protection is often found inside of buildings. Therefore, if the team takes fire in the street, it may choose to fight its way into a building and return fire out of the building's windows. The team might also choose to move to an upper story of the building to achieve better fields of fire. However, it is important to remember that a building might be occupied by enemies and the team should be prepared to respond accordingly.

# MOVING DOWN STREETS

## Fire Team Movement

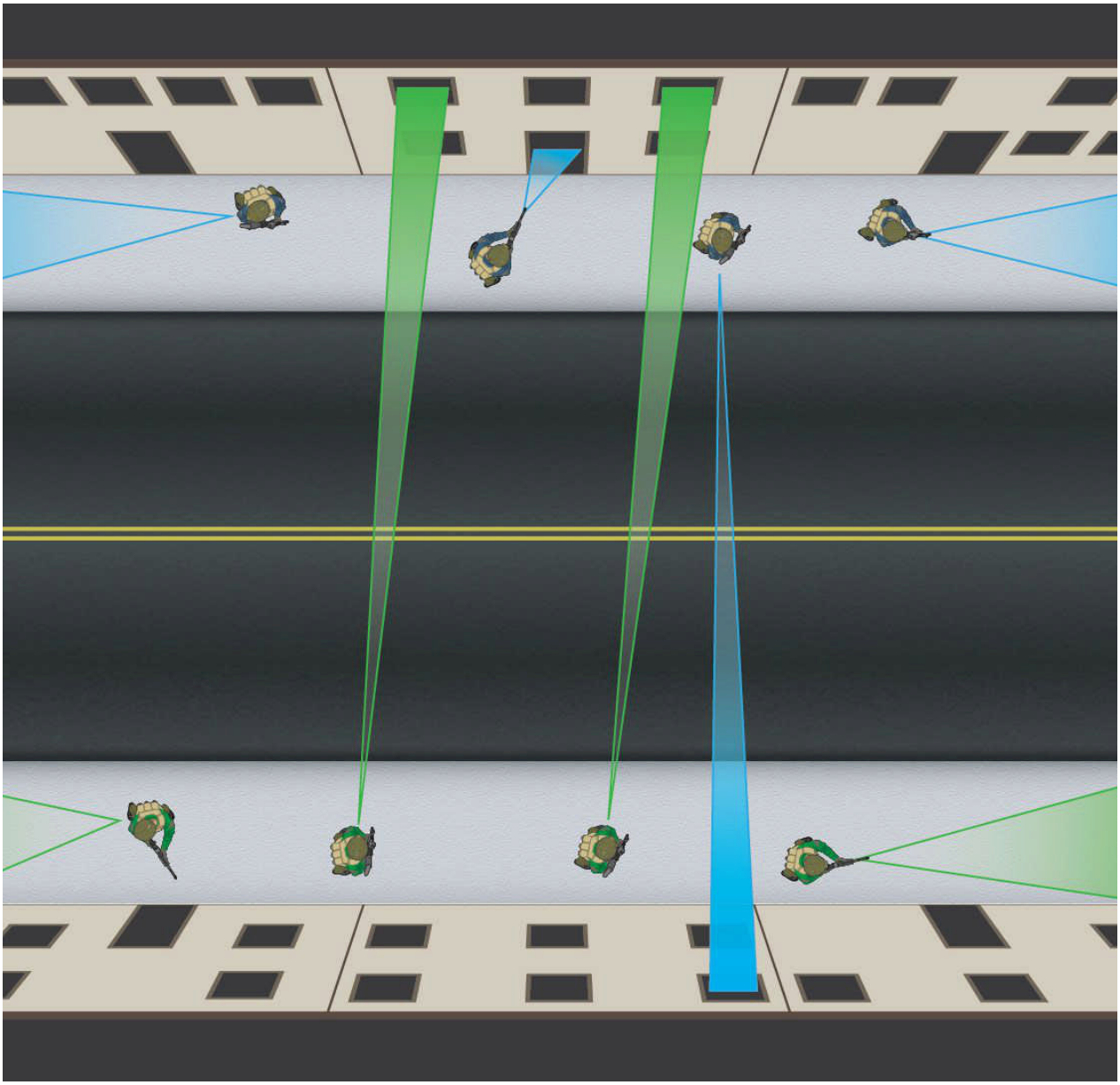
If a 4-person fire team must move down a street in a hostile environment, they should move in a staggered, single-file formation with 5-10 meters between each team member, remaining close to buildings or other covered positions. This way if the team members take hostile fire, they can use the buildings as cover. Team members should not move down the center of the street in the open. Also, in many urban environments, there are cars parked along the side of the street. If team members move between the cars and the buildings they can take cover to protect themselves from fire from either side. However, exact positioning will depend on the direction of the threat. Team members will want to put cover between them and the potential threat. Ideally, team members should never be more than 5 meters away from a covered position.



# MOVING DOWN STREETS

## Squad Movement and Cross Coverage

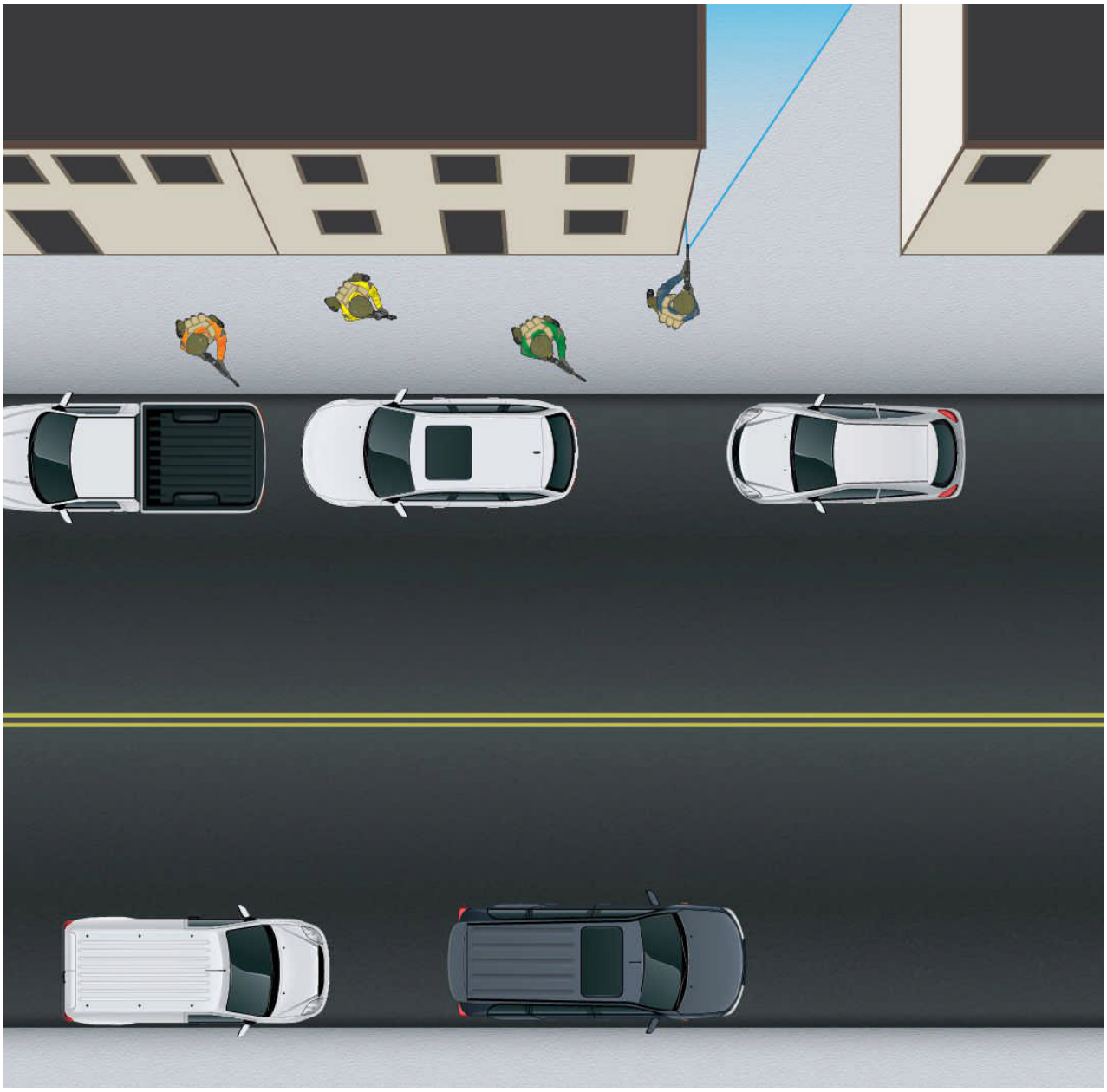
If a squad sized unit is moving down a street, it should split up into two fire teams, which should move in two files on opposite sides of the road. By moving on each side of the road, team members can both maintain cross coverage on alleys and intersections and they can also keep an eye on upper story windows on each side of the street to protect each other from an enemy who chooses to emerge from a window and fire downwards.



# CROSSING ALLEYS OR NARROW STREETS

## STEP 1 – Establish Near Side Security

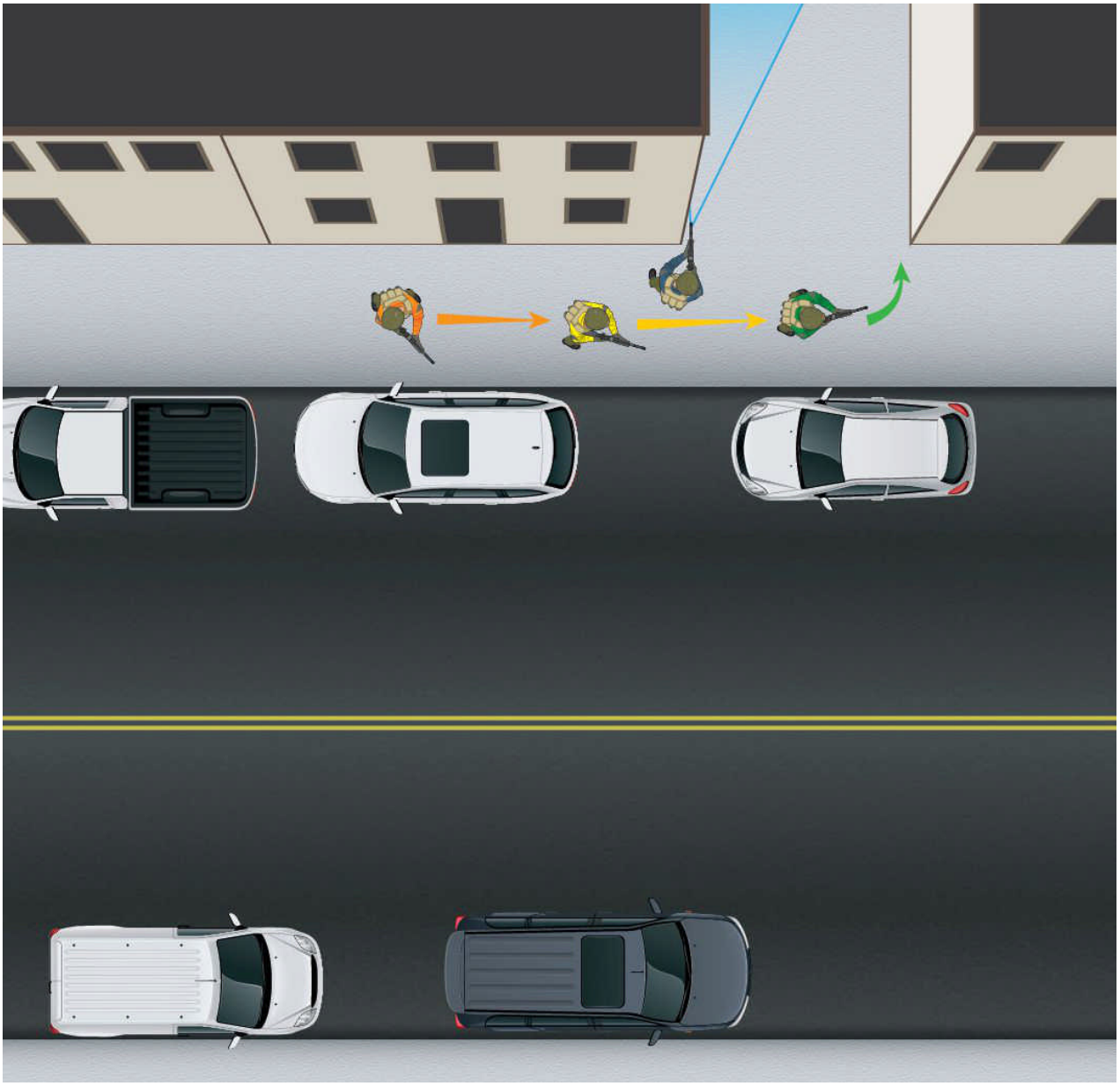
If team members are taking fire from an alley but have to cross it, the lead team member will move around the corner and take up a covered firing position to provide cover down the alley.



# CROSSING ALLEYS OR NARROW STREETS

## STEP 2 – Sprint Across

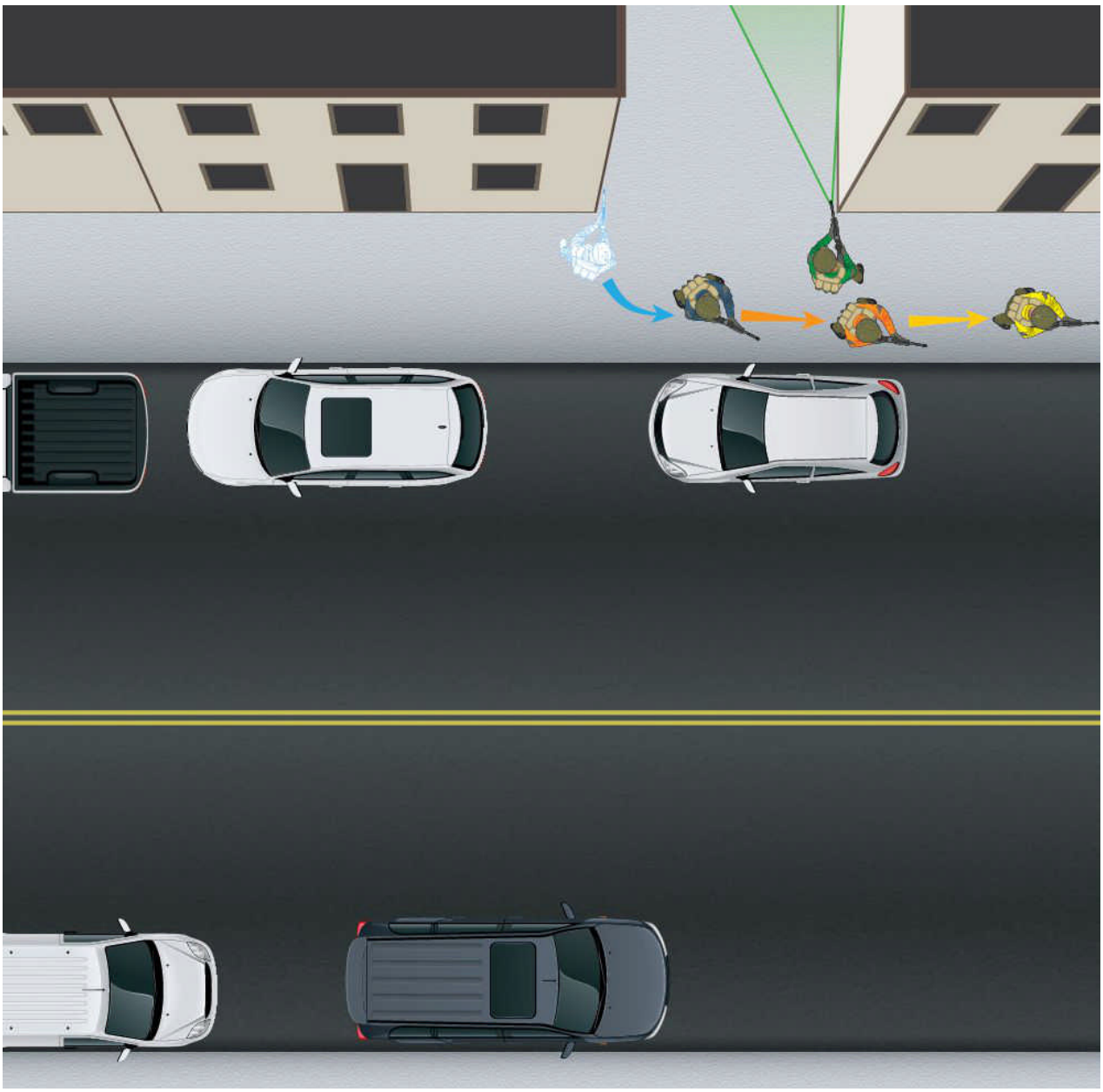
Once near side security is established, the remaining team members will sprint across the alley, maintaining spacing (5-10 meters between team members) as much as possible. When the last team member passes the team member providing near side security, the passing team member will call out “last man” (or use an arm squeeze) and the covering team member will join the rear of the formation.



# CROSSING ALLEYS OR NARROW STREETS

## STEP 3 – Establish Far Side Security

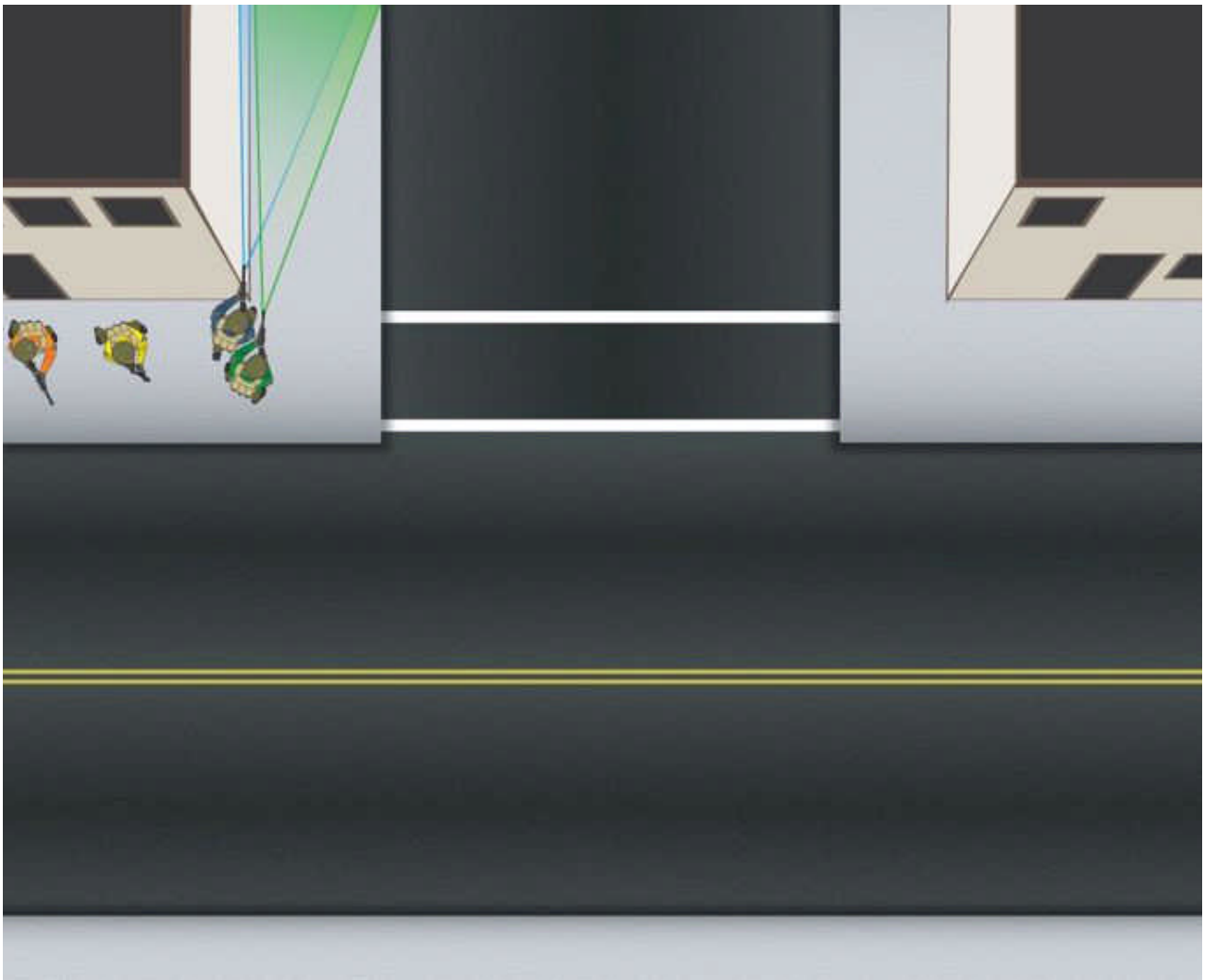
When the first team member reaches the far side, he/she will stop at the corner and take up a covered firing position to provide cover down the alley. The rest of the team members will pass by and continue moving down the street. When the last team member passes the team member providing far side security, the passing team member will call out “last man” and the covering team member will join the rear of the formation.



# CROSSING WIDE STREETS

## STEP 1 – Establish Near Side Security

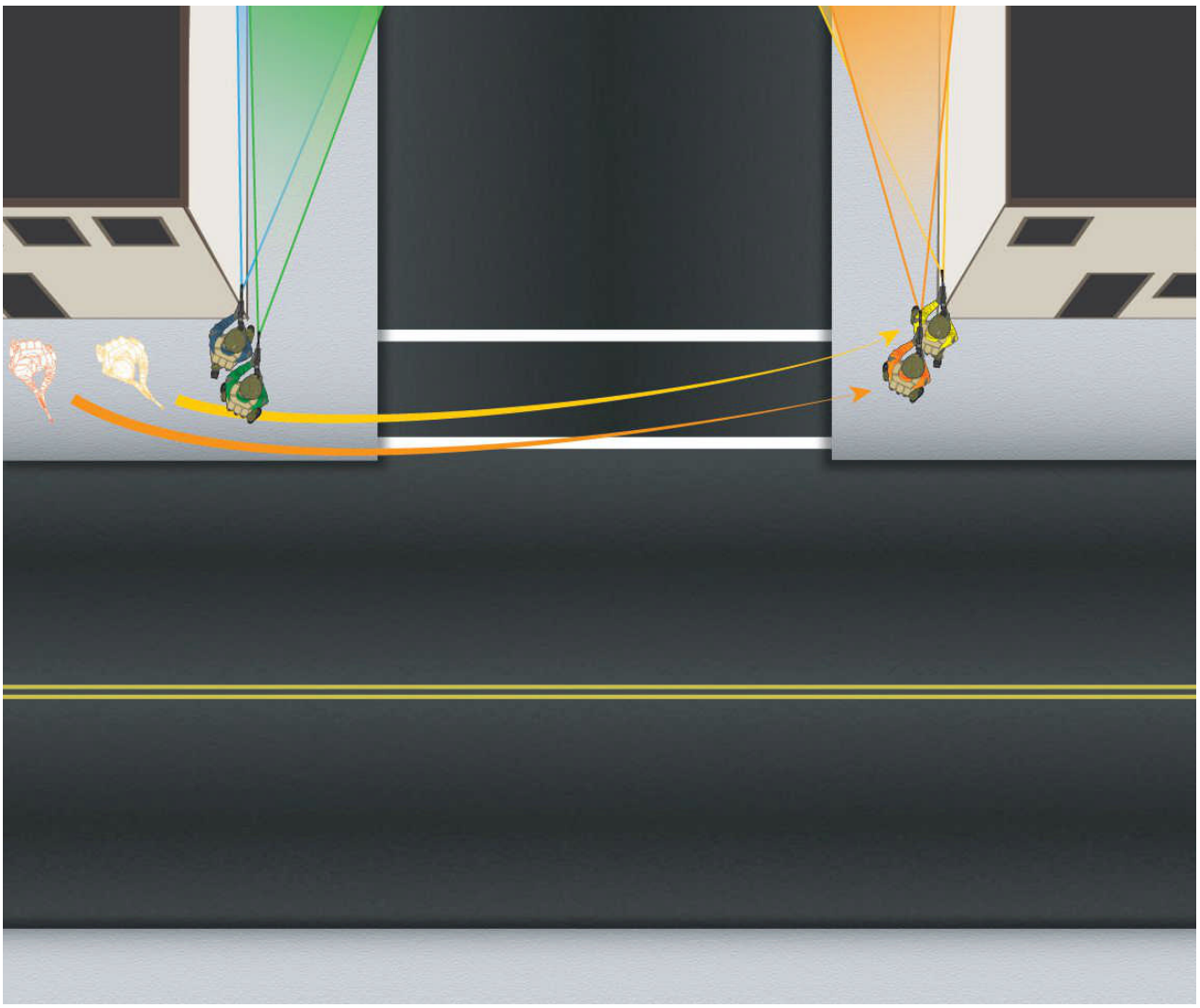
Crossing a wide street under fire is the same as crossing an alley except it is best to place two team members providing cover at each corner. As the team approaches the street, the lead team member will take a knee and the second team member will move behind the lead team member. Both team members will execute a "high-low" technique around the corner. Team members should only cross under fire if absolutely necessary.



# CROSSING WIDE STREETS

## STEP 2 – Establish Far Side Security

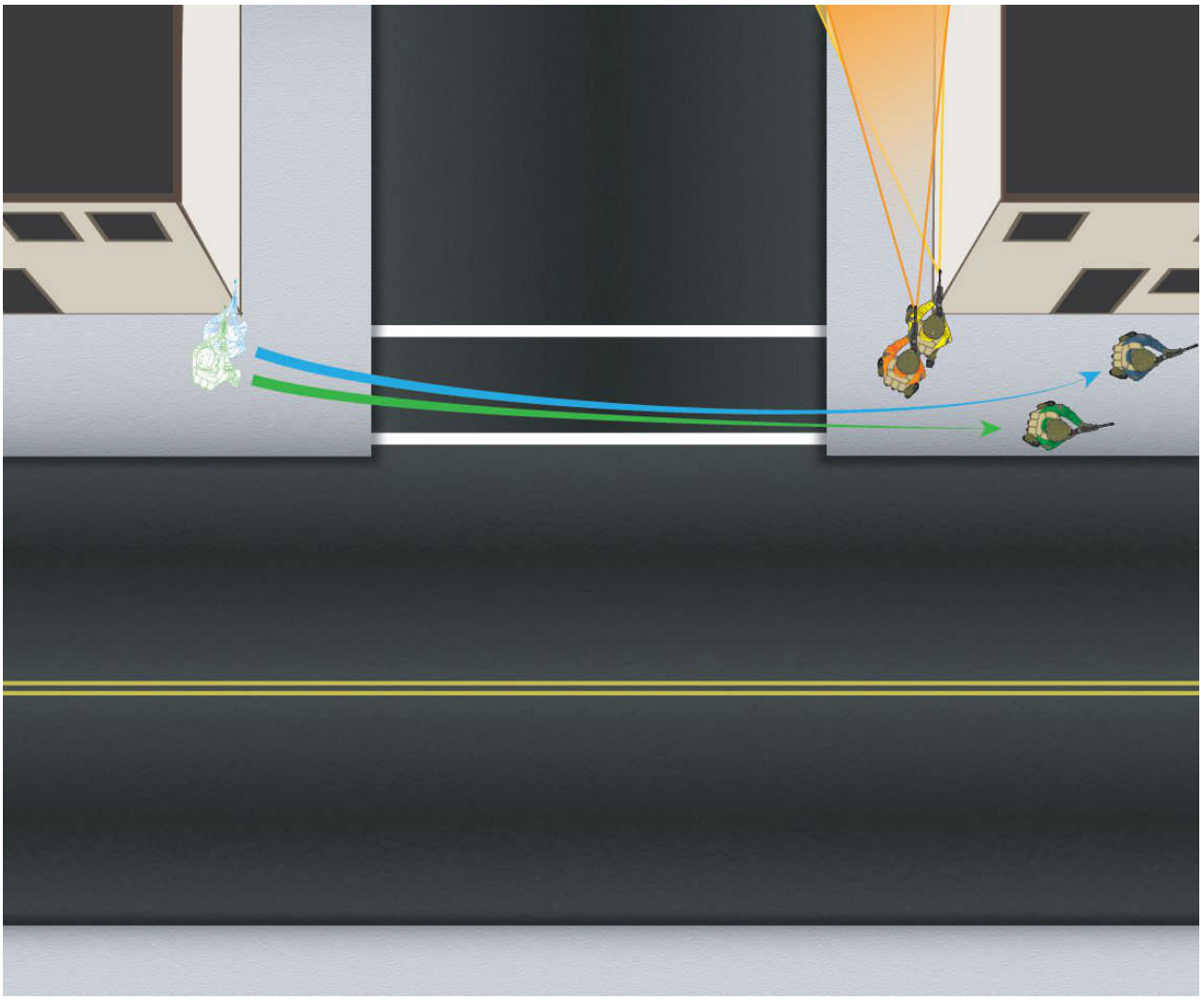
Once near side security is established, the next two team members will sprint as quickly as possible across the street, maintaining spacing (5-10 meters between team members) as much as possible. When the two team members reach the opposite side of the street they will stop and provide far side security. They can either execute another high-low technique or one team member can cover down street while the other covers to the front.



# CROSSING WIDE STREETS

## STEP 3 – Sprint Across

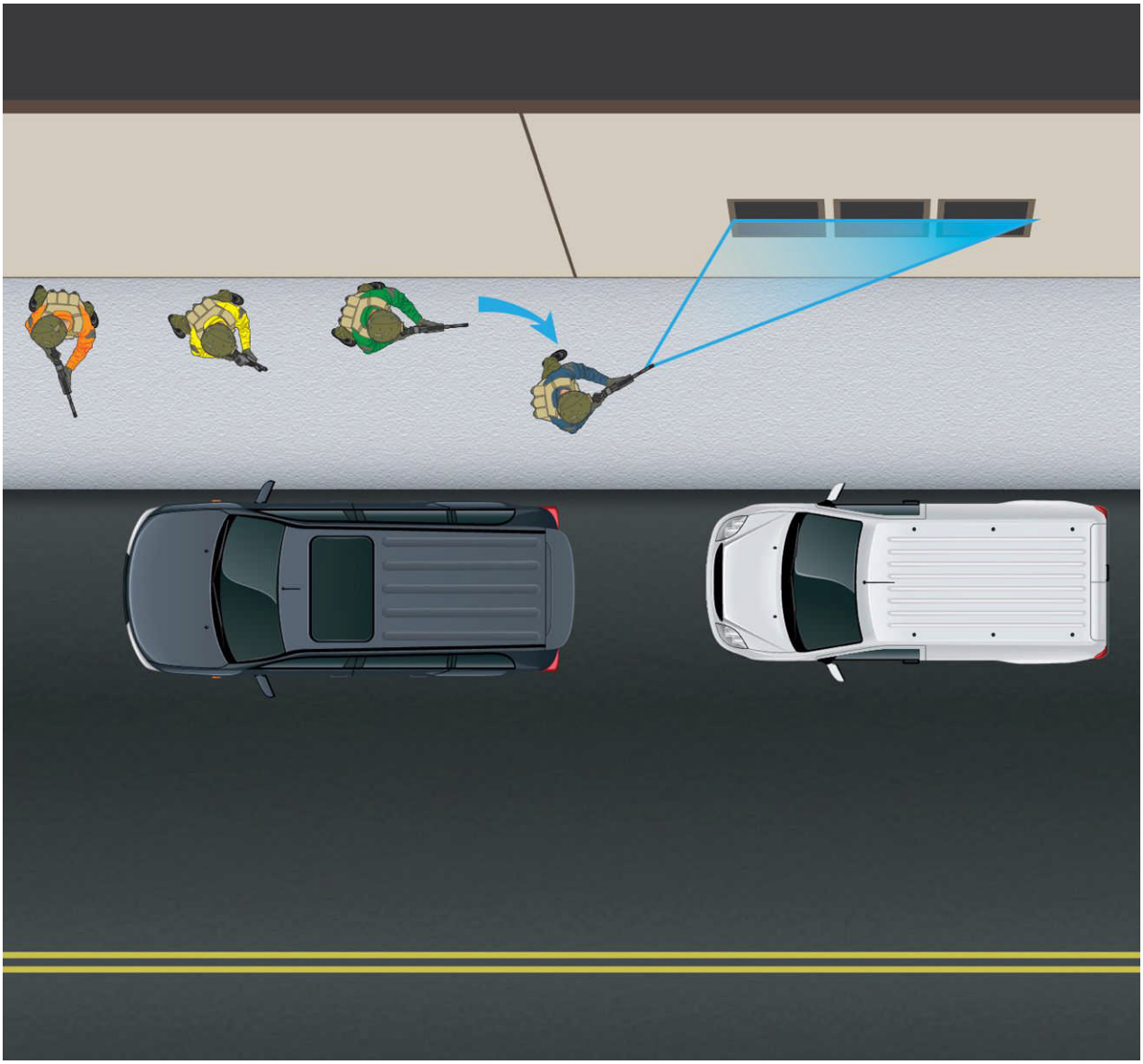
Once both near side security and far side security are established, the rest of the team can sprint across the street. As the team passes each security element they will call out “last man” and the covering team members will join the rear of the formation. If there are only four team members in the team, once near and far side security is established, the near side security team will pick up and sprint across the street.



# CROSSING WINDOWS

## STEP 1 – First Team Member Covers the Near Side

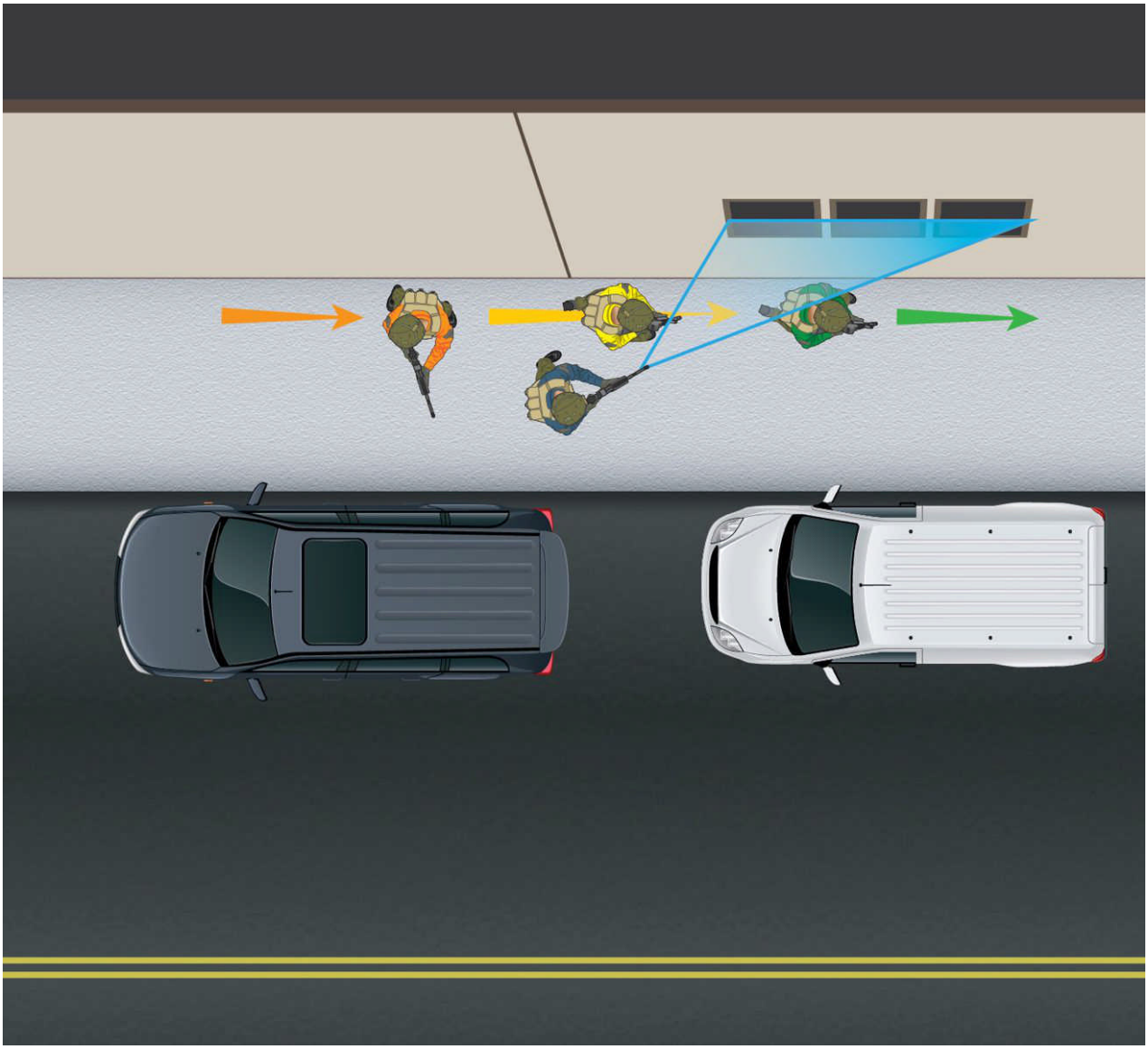
There are some situations when a team will be moving along the side of a building and will encounter windows. It is best for the team not just to walk in front of the windows since enemies inside the building might see the team or shoot at the team through the windows. Instead, when the first team member identifies the window, he/she will step out, away from the wall and raise the weapon to cover the windows.



# CROSSING WINDOWS

## STEP 2 – Team Crouches and Moves Past

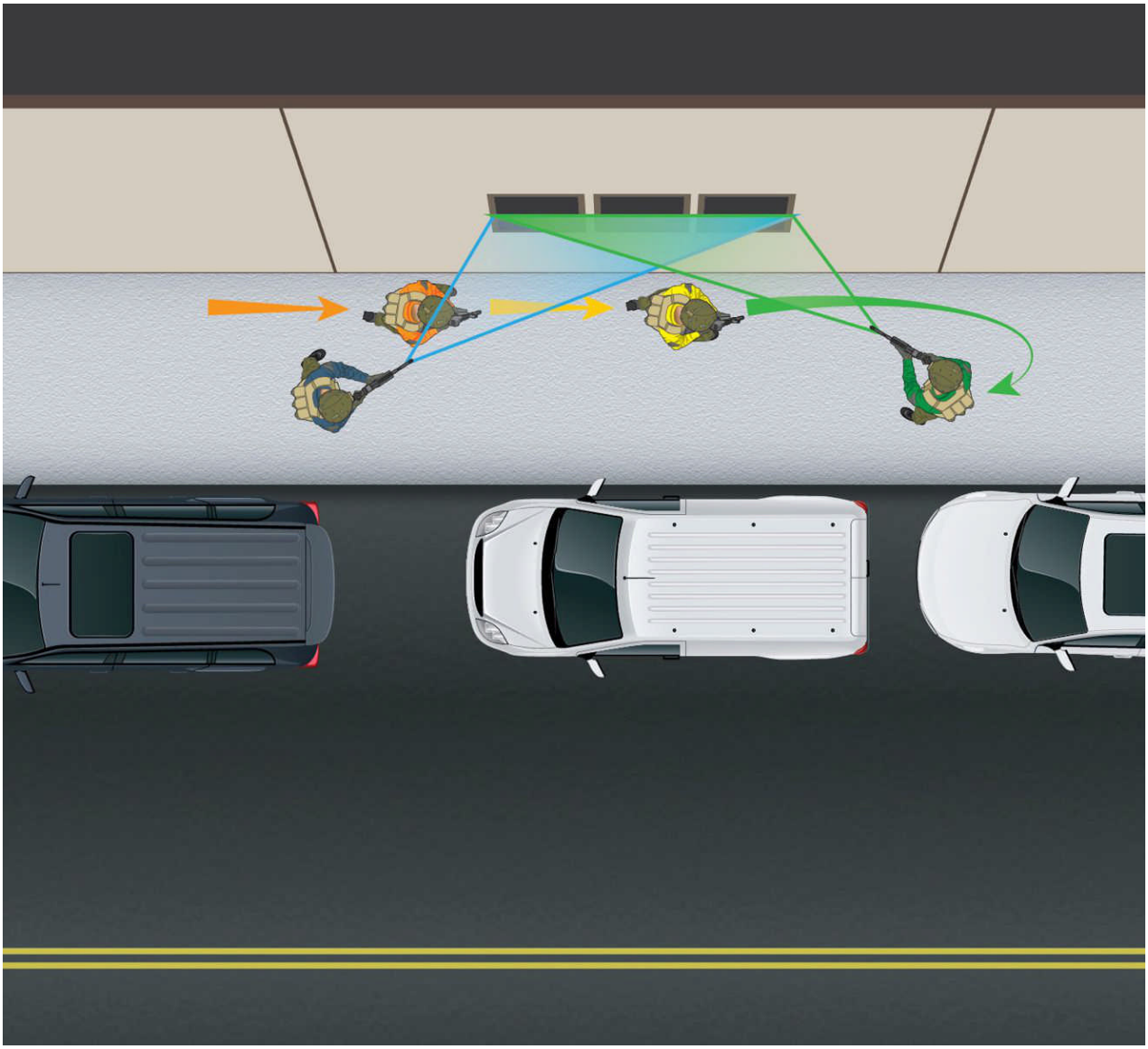
As the lead team member steps out and raises the weapon, this is an automatic signal to the next team member that there are windows ahead. The next team member will crouch as low as possible and move forward, passing under the windows. The rest of the team will crouch and follow right behind. By stepping out, the lead team member creates a space for the rest of the team to move through, staying low and close to the wall.



# CROSSING WINDOWS

## STEP 3 – Establish Cover on the Far Side

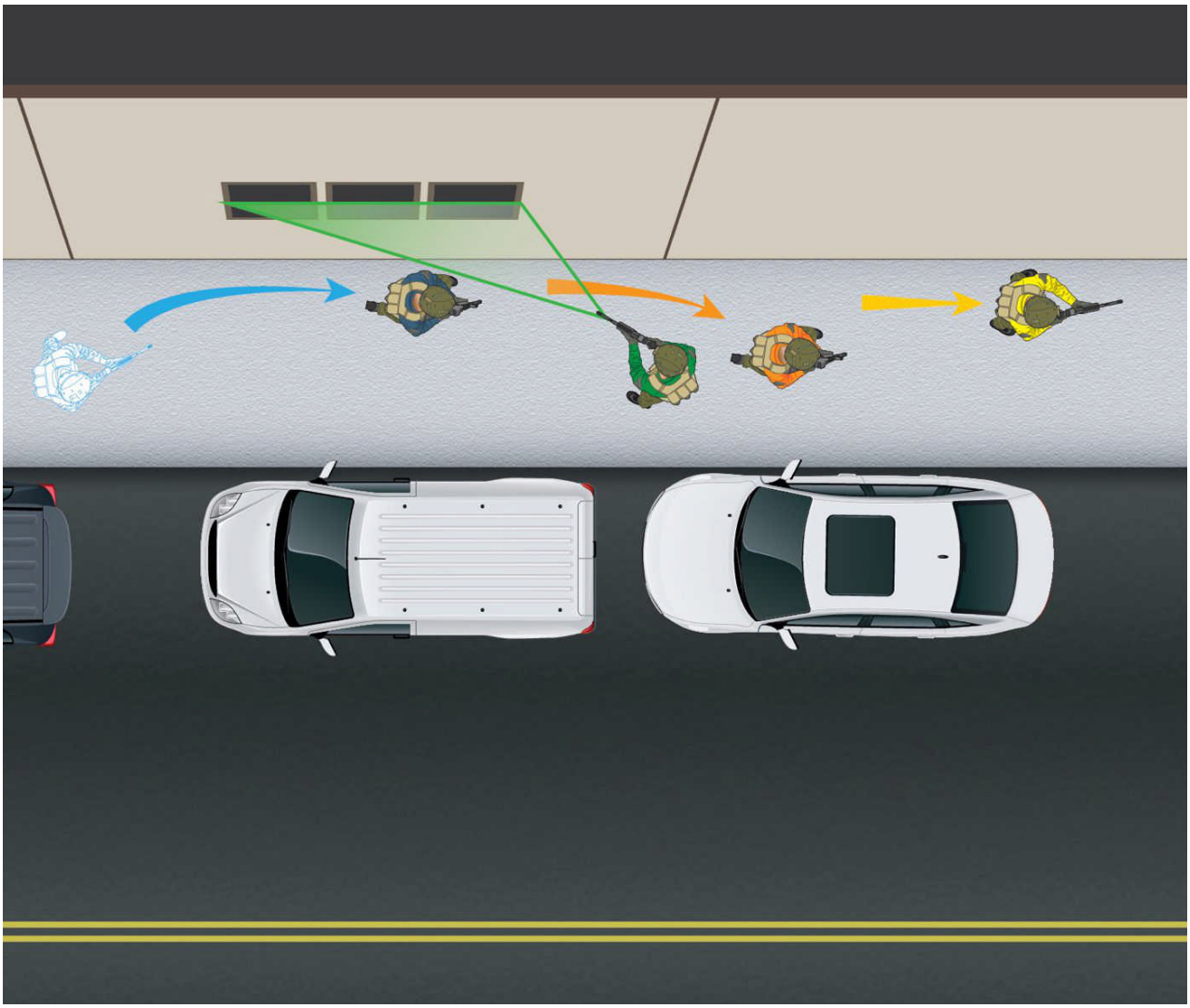
The first team member to move safely past the windows will step away from the wall and turn outward away from the building to cover the windows from the opposite side. It is important that the team member turn outward because otherwise he/she runs the risk of hitting the next team member in the face with the weapon.



# CROSSING WINDOWS

## STEP 4 – Team Passes Through

By this time, the last team member in the team will have passed the team member covering the near side. As the last team member passes the covering team member, he/she will call out “last man” to ensure no team member is left behind. The team member covering the near side will rejoin the rear of the formation. When the team passes the team member covering the far side, the same thing will happen and that covering team member will rejoin the formation as well.



# HIGH-INTENSITY URBAN COMBAT
## Machine Guns and Grenades

In a high-intensity urban fight, commanders will have much more freedom in their use of heavy weapons and firepower. This includes the liberal use of machine guns and grenades. Historically, urban combat has been a very costly affair. Entire platoons or companies can be destroyed in seconds, and it might take wave after wave of assault to seize an enemy-held building. One way to reduce casualties is to throw or launch grenades through windows and fire automatic weapons through walls.

Instead of paying a high price in friendly casualties by sending multiple platoons into the teeth of an enemy urban defense, it can be possible to clear much of an enemy-held building simply by firing grenades, rockets, medium and heavy machine guns into every window and through every wall from an adjacent building. The effectiveness of this sort of attack-by-fire will be determined by the strength of the target building's construction and the quality of enemy defensive positions. It is also important to remember that using a high-volume of fire is very taxing on ammunition. Therefore, firepower solutions are unfeasible if there is not a surplus of ammunition and well-established logistics support.

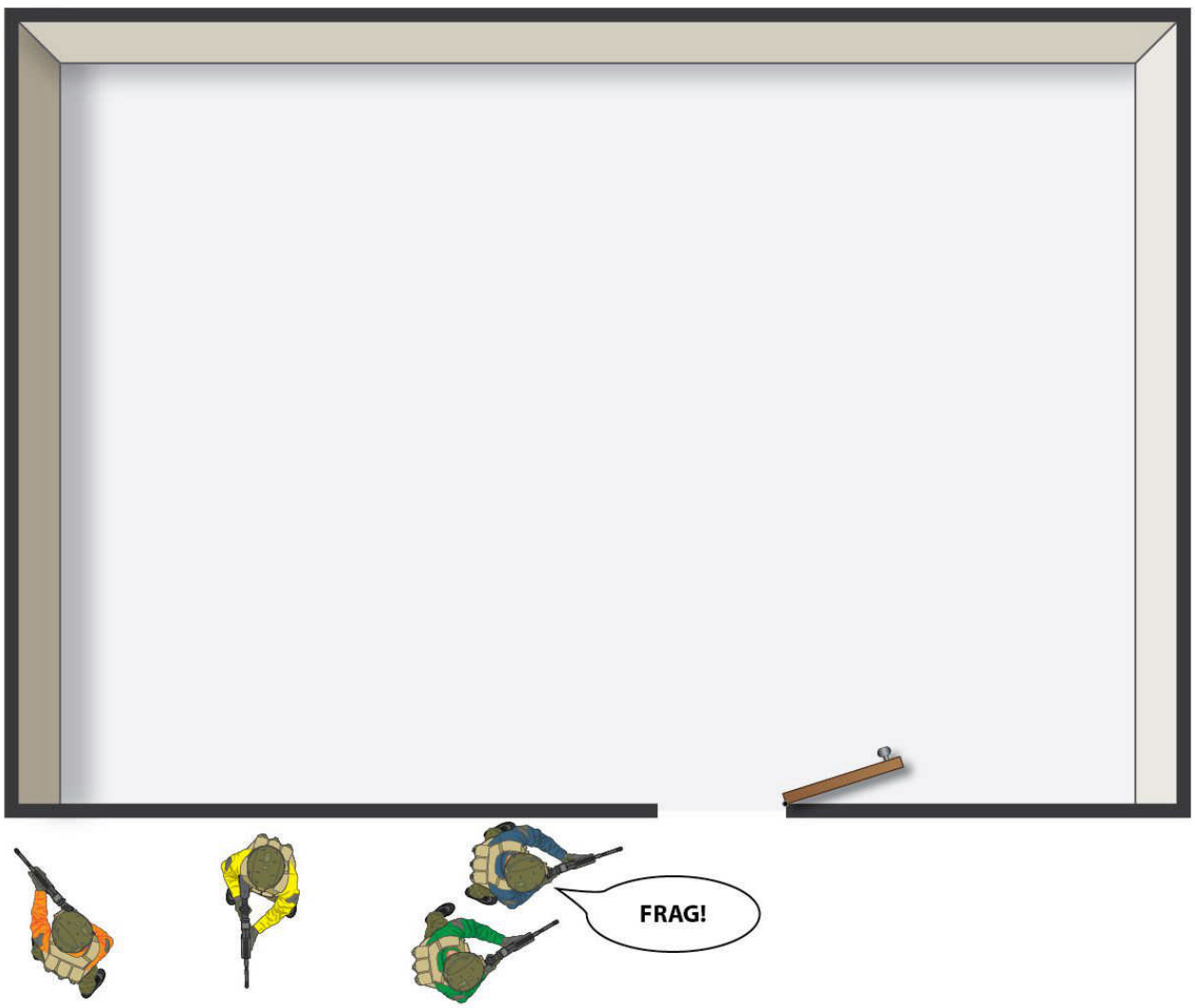
In addition, employing a heavy volume of fire in confined areas can be dangerous if leaders do not impose strict control measures on subordinate units. If a unit fires through a wall, it is possible for bullets to accidentally strike friendly troops if the proper control measures are not in place. The same applies to tossing grenades. In addition, ricochets can prove especially dangerous when firing automatic weapons indoors.

It is important to realize that the nature of conventional urban war is much more fluid and adaptable than the precision urban operations typical of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism. When squaring off against a highly-trained and well-armed enemy, the same technique will rarely work twice. Therefore, high-intensity urban combat is less about smooth execution of room clearing techniques and more about creative thinking and "dirty tricks." While the basics of urban movement and CQB remain generally consistent, the key to victory lies more in outsmarting or surprising the enemy and specific tactics evolve constantly.

# FRAGMENTATION GRENADE EMPLOYMENT

## STEP 1 – Call for the Fragmentation Grenade

Before employing a fragmentation grenade, it is critical to remember that shrapnel from the explosion can travel through walls and injure the team. Therefore, the team must take a moment to assess the environment, estimate the thickness or strength of walls and identify objects that might deflect the grenade back at the team. If it is safe to throw a grenade, the team leader will call out "frag!" The lead team member can also call for the grenade since the lead team member may be in the best position to see or hear signs of a threat in the room. Experienced teams might choose to use hand-and-arm signals instead of verbal commands.



# FRAGMENTATION GRENADE EMPLOYMENT

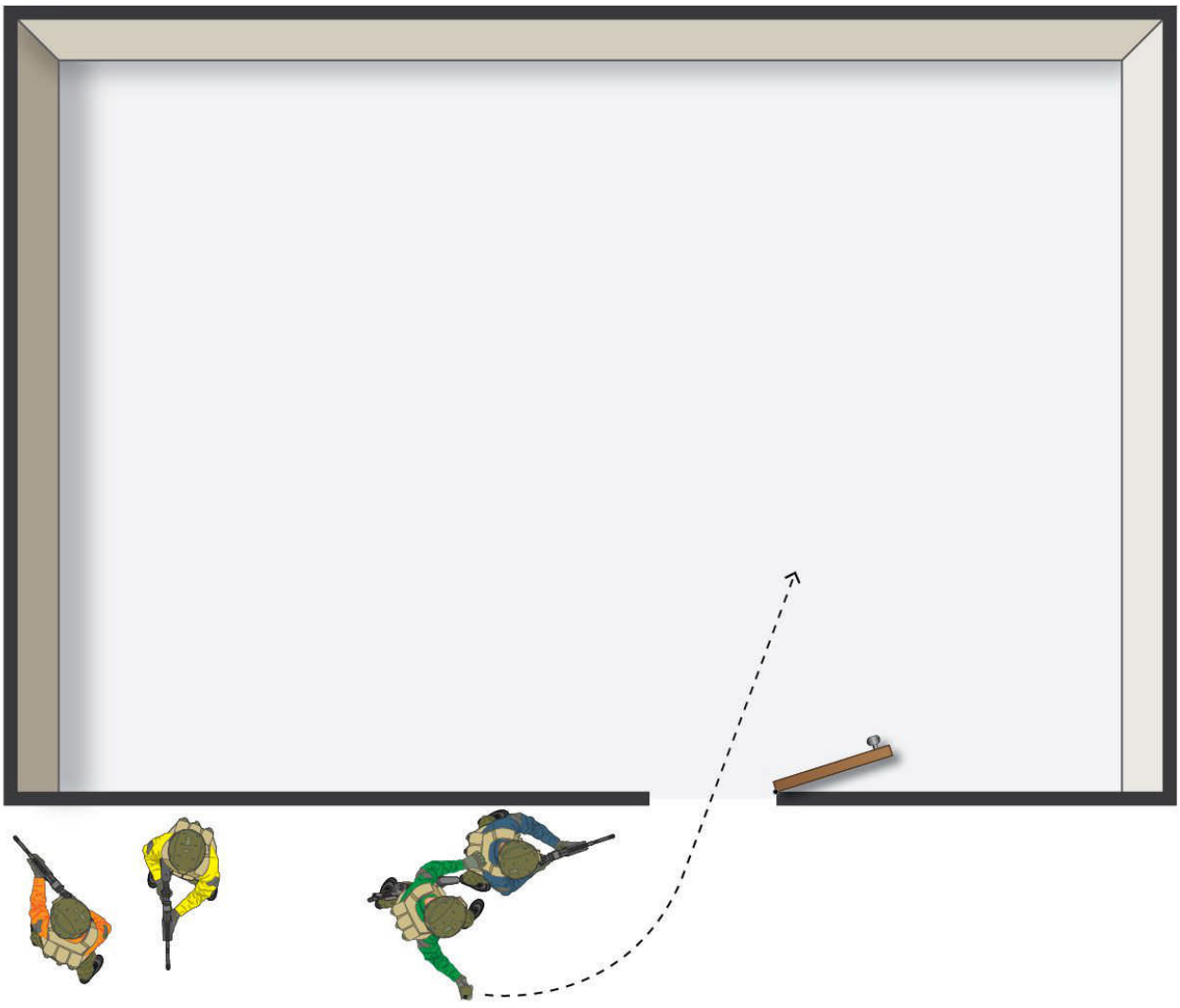
## STEP 2 – Equip and Show the Fragmentation Grenade

In general, fragmentation grenades are best carried on a team member's own belt or vest. The second team member will draw the grenade, remove any additional safeties and extend the grenade out next to the lead team member's head so the lead team member can clearly see it through his/her peripheral vision. When the lead team member sees the grenade, he/she will nod to acknowledge it. This process of showing and acknowledging the grenade is an extra precaution to verify that the lead team member knows the grenade is about to be used. It could be fatal if the lead team member accidentally enters the room before the grenade goes off. Therefore, in some cases, the second team member may want to hold the lead team member by the vest until the grenade explodes.

# FRAGMENTATION GRENADE EMPLOYMENT

## STEP 3 – Pull the Pin and Toss the Grenade

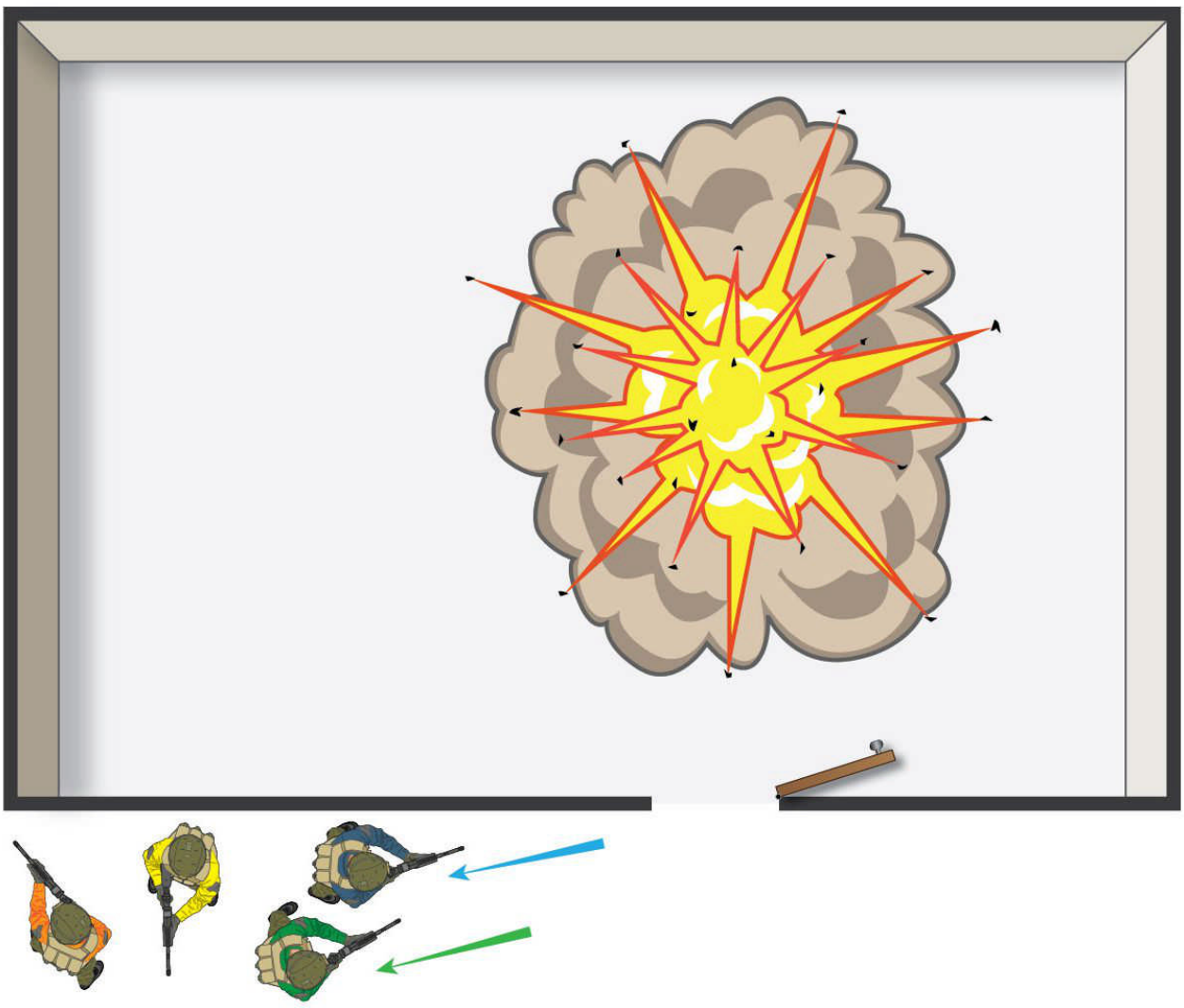
Once the lead team member acknowledges the grenade, the second team member will bring the grenade back to his/her chest, pull the pin and then toss the grenade around the lead team member into the room in a smooth sweeping motion. It is important that the second team member tosses the grenade with a forehand (not backhand) motion and toss it directly through the door, into the center of the room. Trying to toss the grenade in more complicated ways or bouncing it off of walls can cause the grenade to bounce back at the team or end up in a suboptimal location for entry.



# FRAGMENTATION GRENADE EMPLOYMENT

## STEP 4 – Step Back and Prepare to Enter

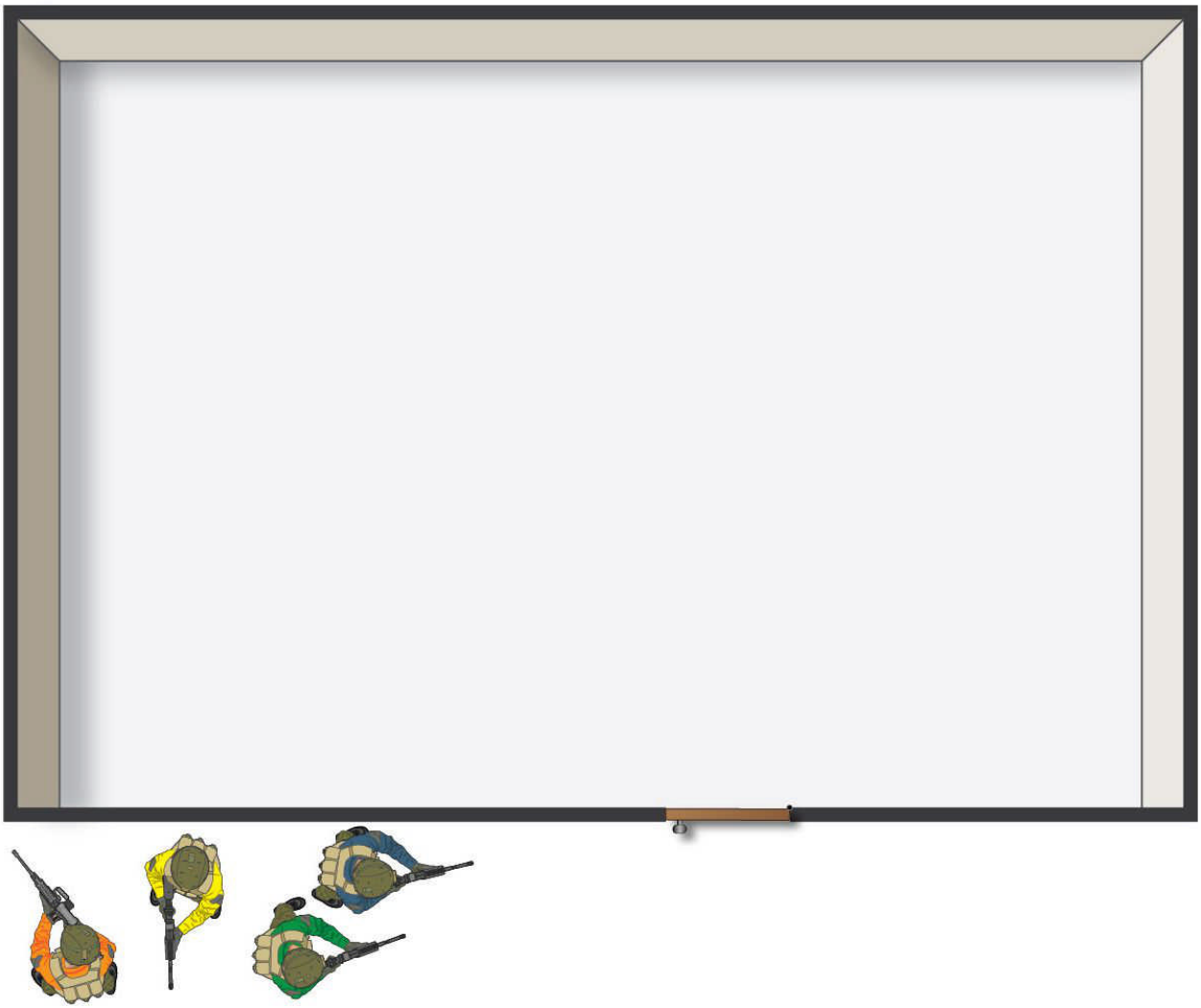
After the grenade is tossed into the room, the team should back away as much as possible to avoid being hit by shrapnel. Even if there is a wall between the team and the grenade, the wall might not be strong enough to protect against the explosion. Once the grenade goes off, the team will enter and clear the room using the technique of their choosing. The team should try to enter the room as quickly as possible after the grenade goes off in order to capitalize on the suppressive effects of the grenade. It is also important that the team member throwing the grenade use the few seconds before the grenade goes off to bring his/her weapon back to the ready position and prepare to enter the room.



# SUPRESSIVE FIRE THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 1 – Identify a Possible Threat

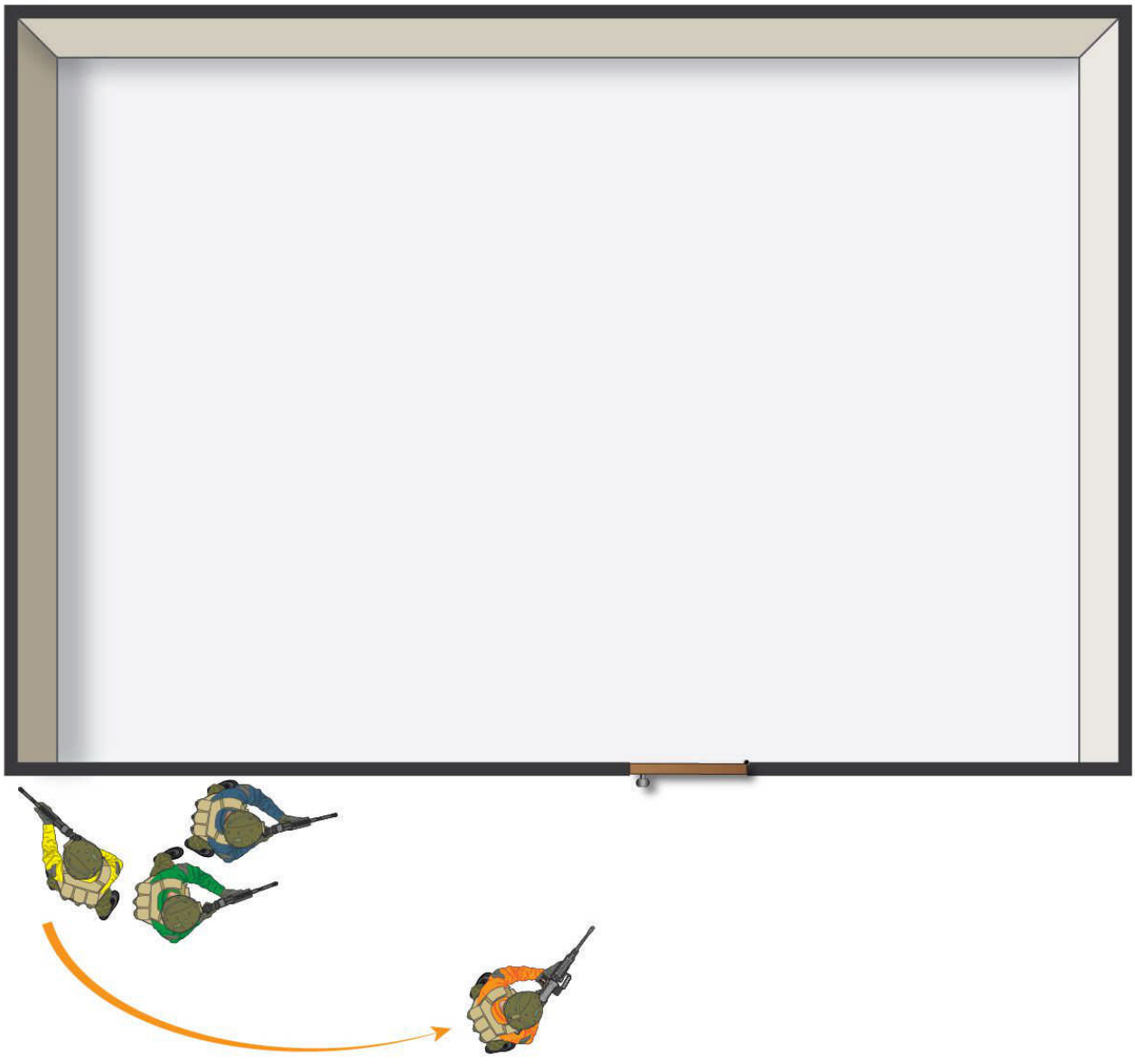
In a high-intensity conventional engagement against a heavily armed enemy, it can be very dangerous to enter and clear a room if multiple enemies are waiting inside with automatic weapons. If the team identifies a possible threat in the next room, it may be able to suppress the threat through the wall to minimize exposure. This technique will only work if the wall is weak enough for bullets to pass through, so the team should determine the strength and thickness of the wall before attempting to fire through it. The technique will also work better if the team employs a machine gun as the suppressing weapon. It is most common to use a light machine gun like a Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW) but it is also possible to use a heavier machine gun in some situations.



# SUPRESSIVE FIRE THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 2 – Deploy the Machine Gun

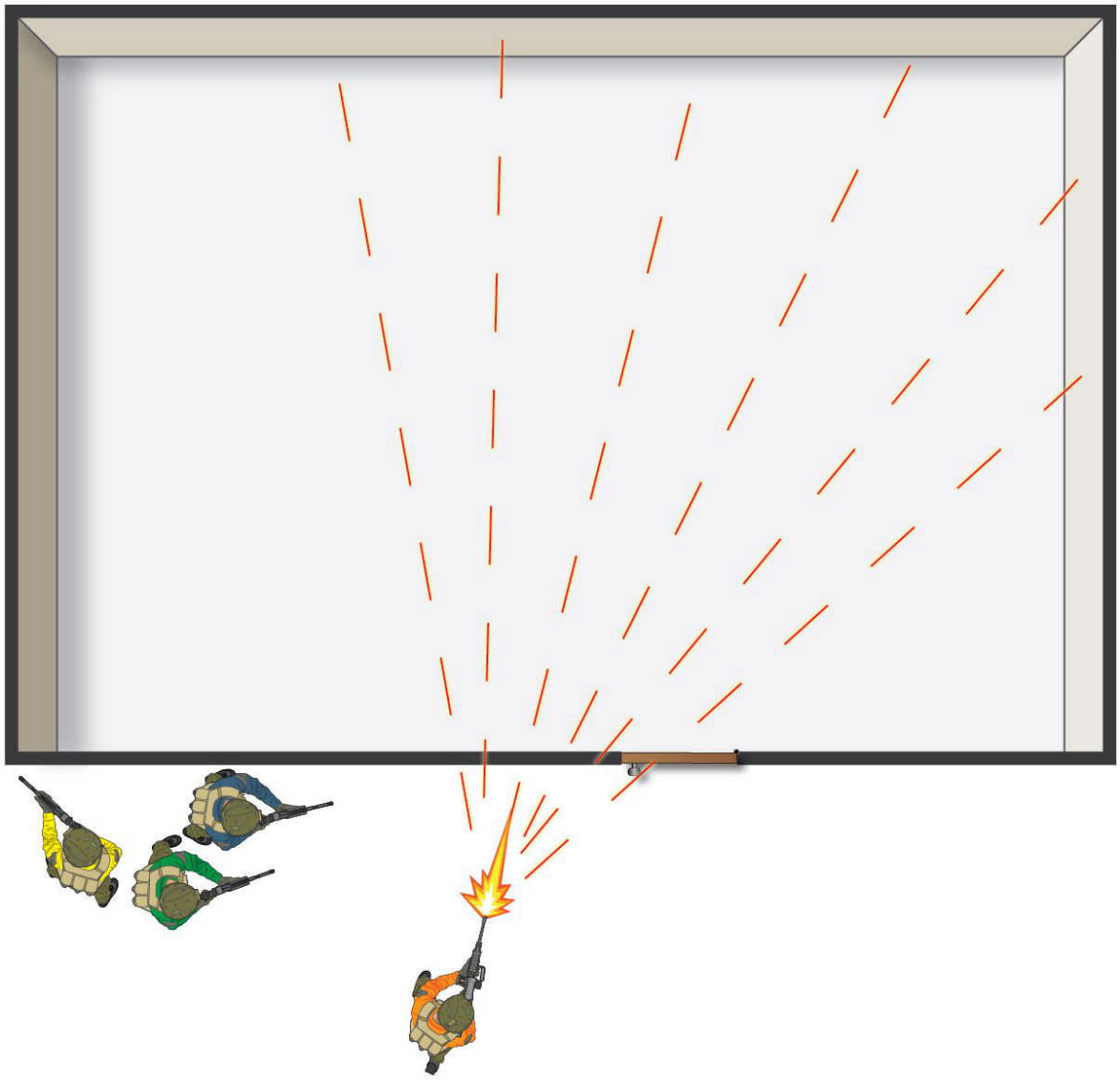
Once the team identifies threats in the next room, the team leader will order the machine gun forward. The machine gunner will swing out, around the team in a sweeping motion while keeping the weapon pointed in the direction of the door, just in case an enemy walks out. The rest of the team will stay back, out of the line of fire, but still direct their weapons towards the door.



# SUPRESSIVE FIRE THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 3 – Suppress Through the Wall

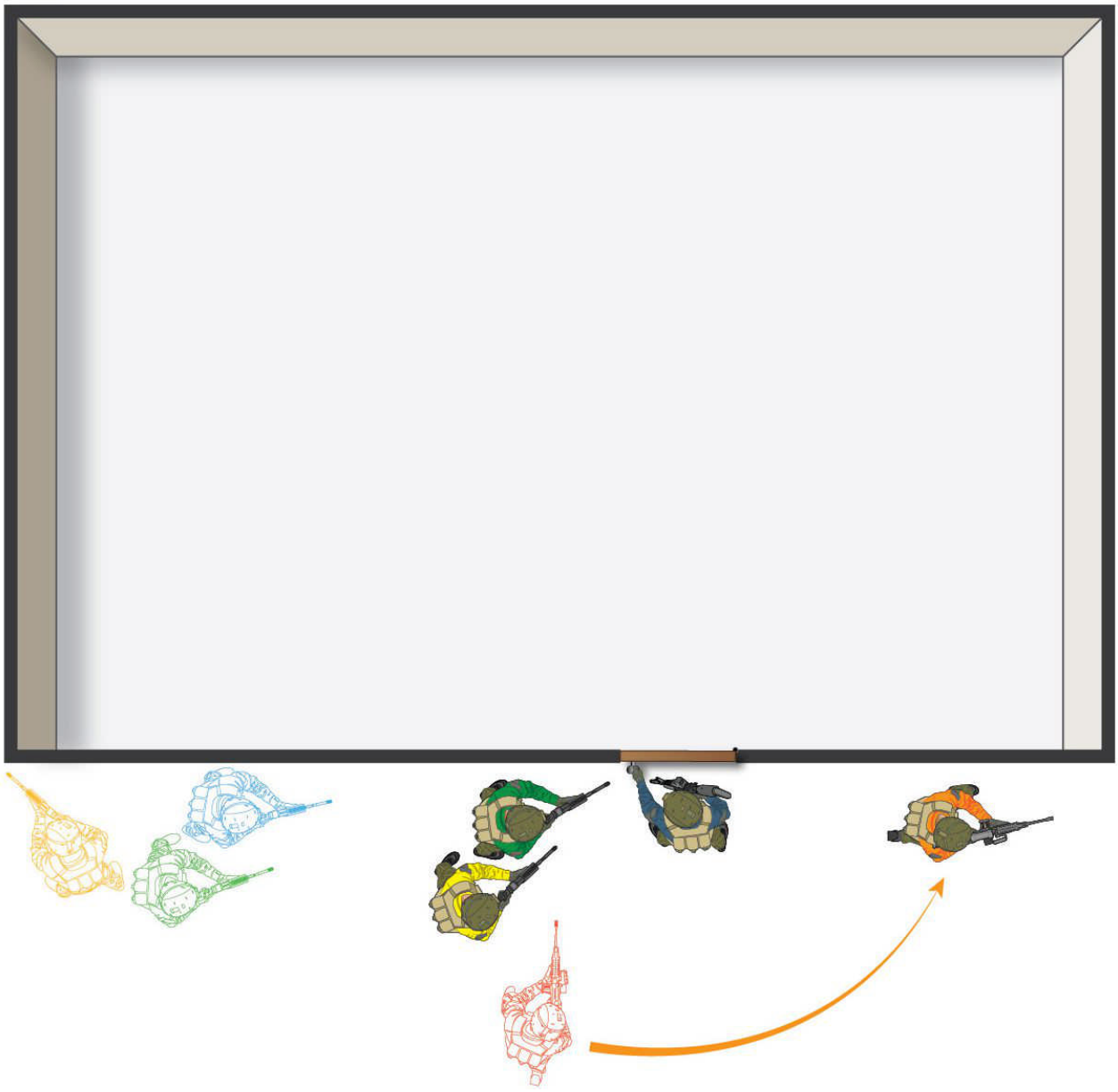
Once the machine gunner is in position, he/she will fire the machine gun through the wall and door, traversing it back and fourth to cover the full width of the target room. It is important that the machine gunner stop the traverse well short of the team to reduce the chances that a stray bullet or ricochet will hit one of the team members. Once again, it is critical to determine the composition of the wall to ensure it is safe to fire at it. It is also important to remember that this technique expends ammunition very quickly. If adequate resupply is not available, teams may be able to suppress only a few rooms before running low on ammunition. If the composition of the wall makes ricochets likely, this technique might not be appropriate for safety reasons.



# SUPRESSIVE FIRE THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 4 – Prepare to Enter

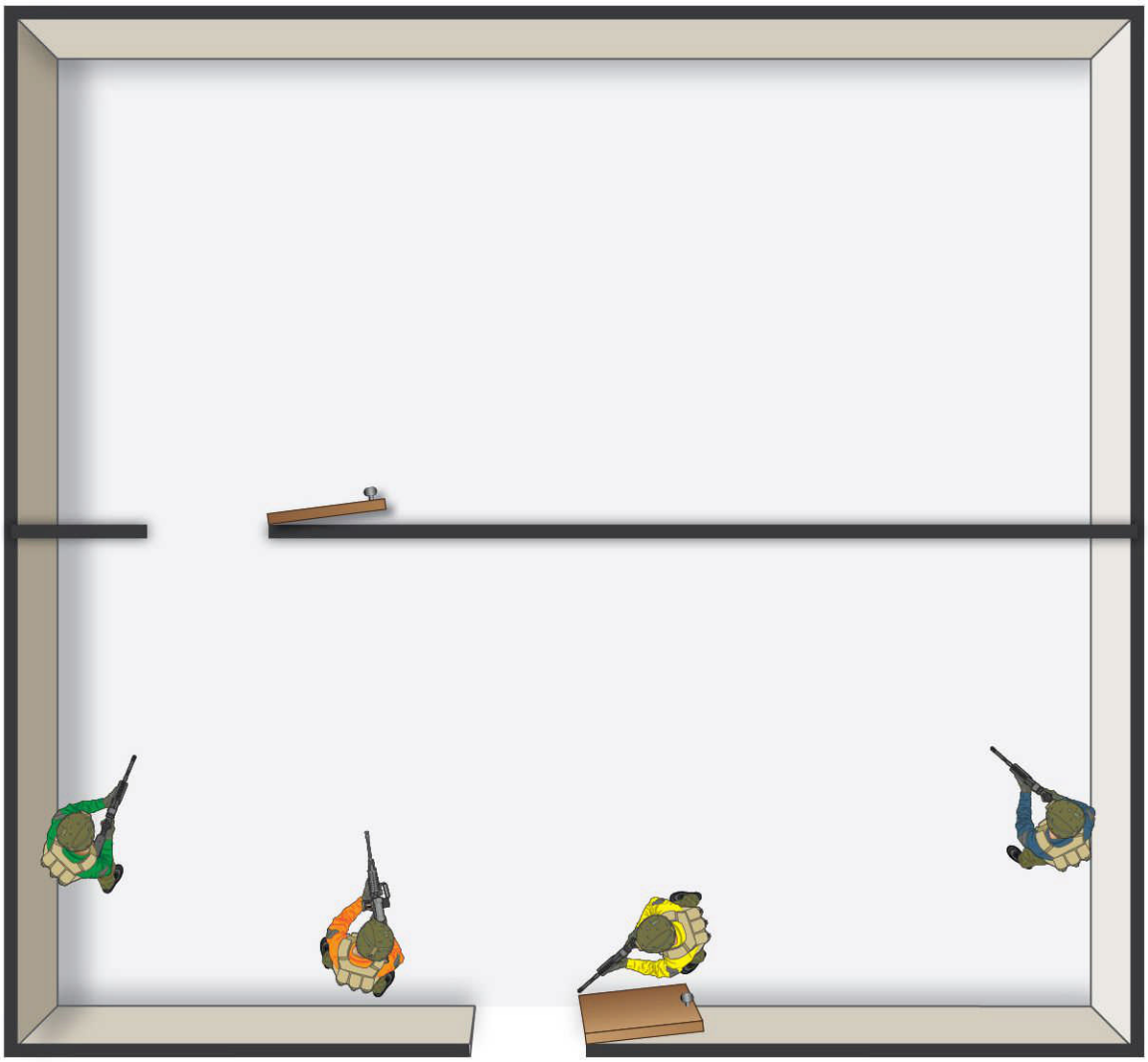
Firing through the wall will have likely killed or suppressed some or all of the enemies in the adjacent room, making it safer for the team to enter. The machine gunner will move out of the way and provide security in the direction of greatest threat while the rest of the team stacks on the door and prepares to enter, using any of the techniques already described.



# CLEARING ADJACENT ROOMS BY FIRE

## STEP 1 – Identify a Possible Threat

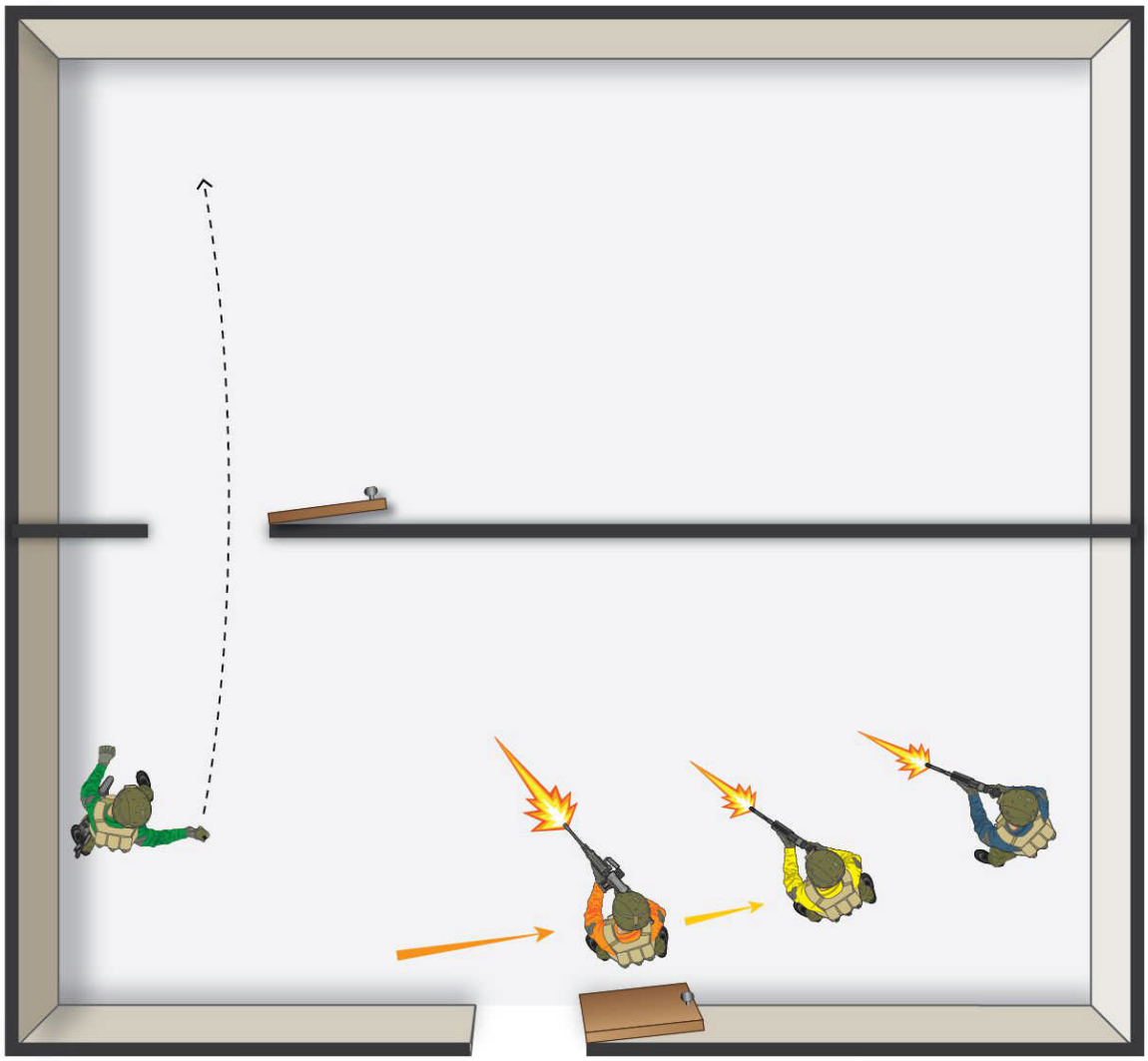
While it is technically impossible to "clear" a room by firing through a wall, a high volume of fire can make it very unlikely that enemies on the opposite side of a wall will survive unscathed. By beating the enemy to the punch and placing a high volume of fire through the wall, it is possible to neutralize threats while minimizing exposure and reducing the chances of friendly casualties. However, it is important to note that any technique that calls for indiscriminate fire expends ammunition very quickly. In addition, such techniques can only be used when there is virtually no possibility that innocent civilians might be in the adjacent room. Therefore, the critical first step is to determine that there is a high probability that only enemies are in the adjacent room before firing through the wall.



# CLEARING ADJACENT ROOMS BY FIRE

## STEP 2 – Suppress and Employ Fragmentation Grenades

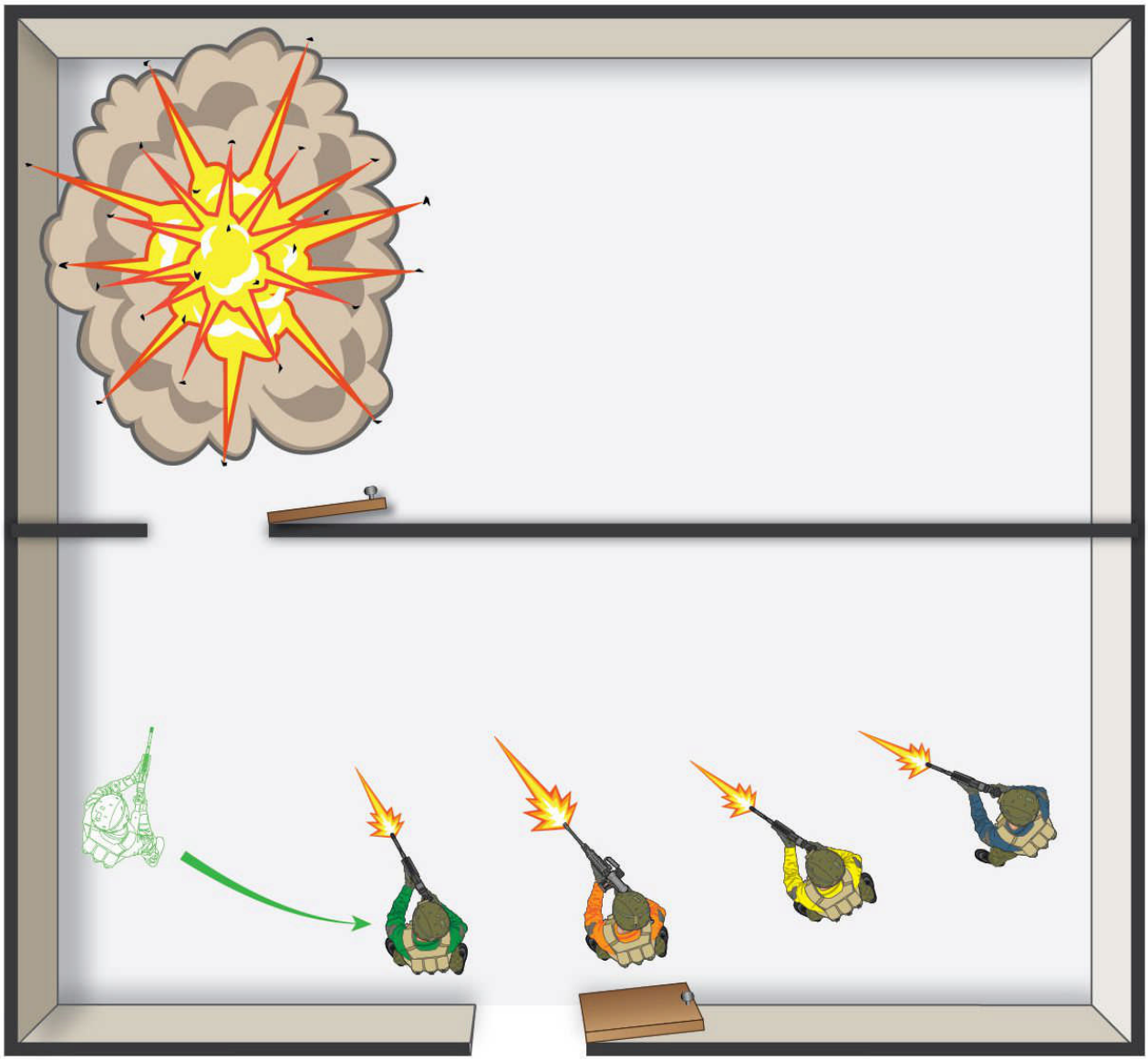
When clearing an adjacent room by fire, the team might want to employ fragmentation grenades. If the team decides to use grenades, the team member with the best angle of visibility into the room is often the best person to toss the grenade. The rest of the team members will lay down suppressive fire through the door and around the door, in order to make sure no enemies can engage the grenade thrower. While laying down suppressive fire, the team will shift away from the door, creating maximum distance from the grenade explosion. The grenade should travel as deep into the next room as possible in order to minimize the chances that team members will be struck by grenade shrapnel. Note that in the example below, any team member could throw the grenade, as long as he/she has a clear angle of observation into the room.



# CLEARING ADJACENT ROOMS BY FIRE

## STEP 3 – Continue to Suppress

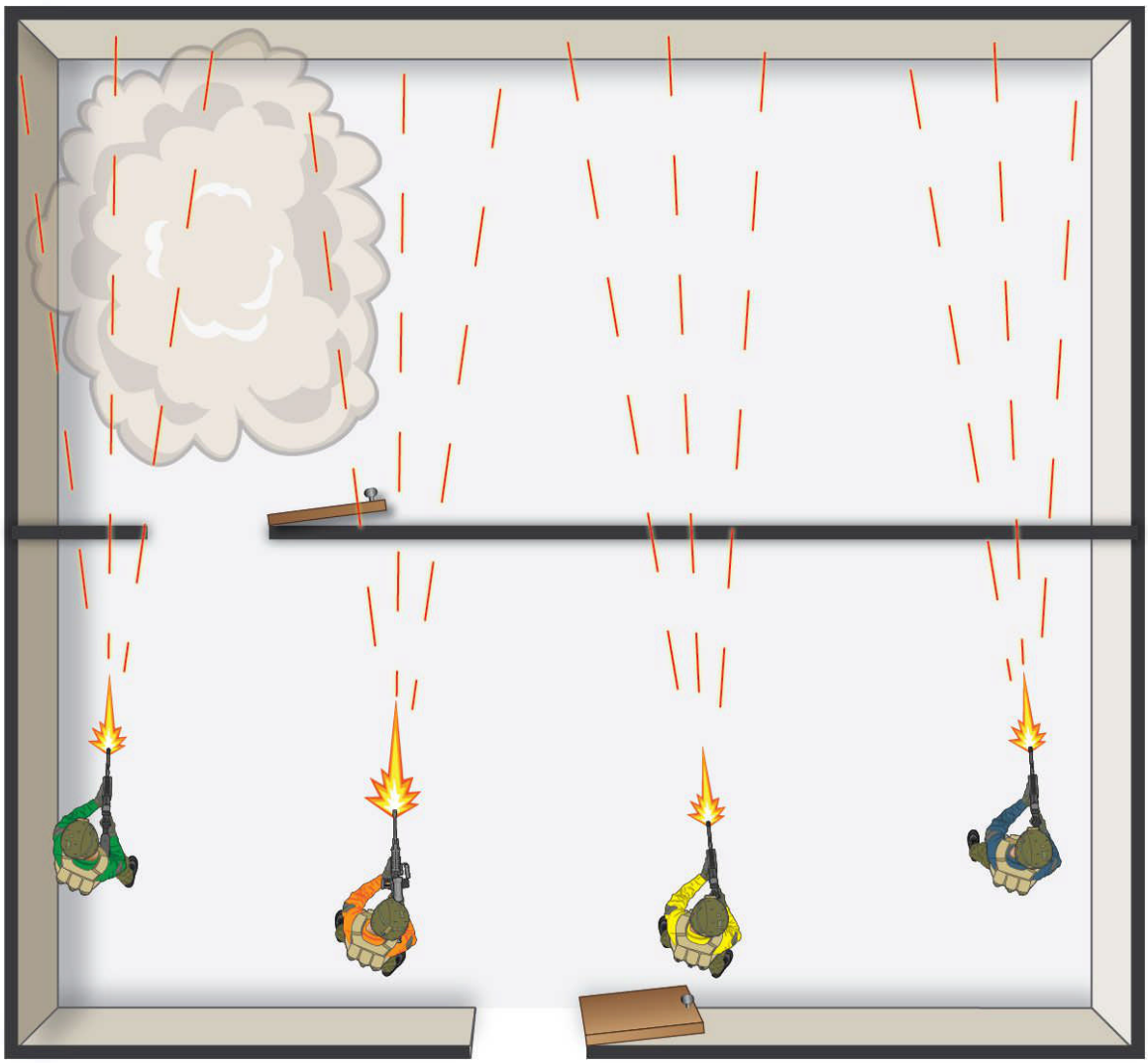
As the grenade goes off, all team members will continue to lay down a heavy volume of automatic fire through the wall. Ideally, the team will have pulled back, as far away from the explosion as possible to minimize the chances of injury. The team should focus the majority of its fire on the door, in order to shoot any enemies that rush through the doorway in an effort to escape the grenade explosion.



# CLEARING ADJACENT ROOMS BY FIRE

## STEP 4 – Step Back and Prepare to Enter

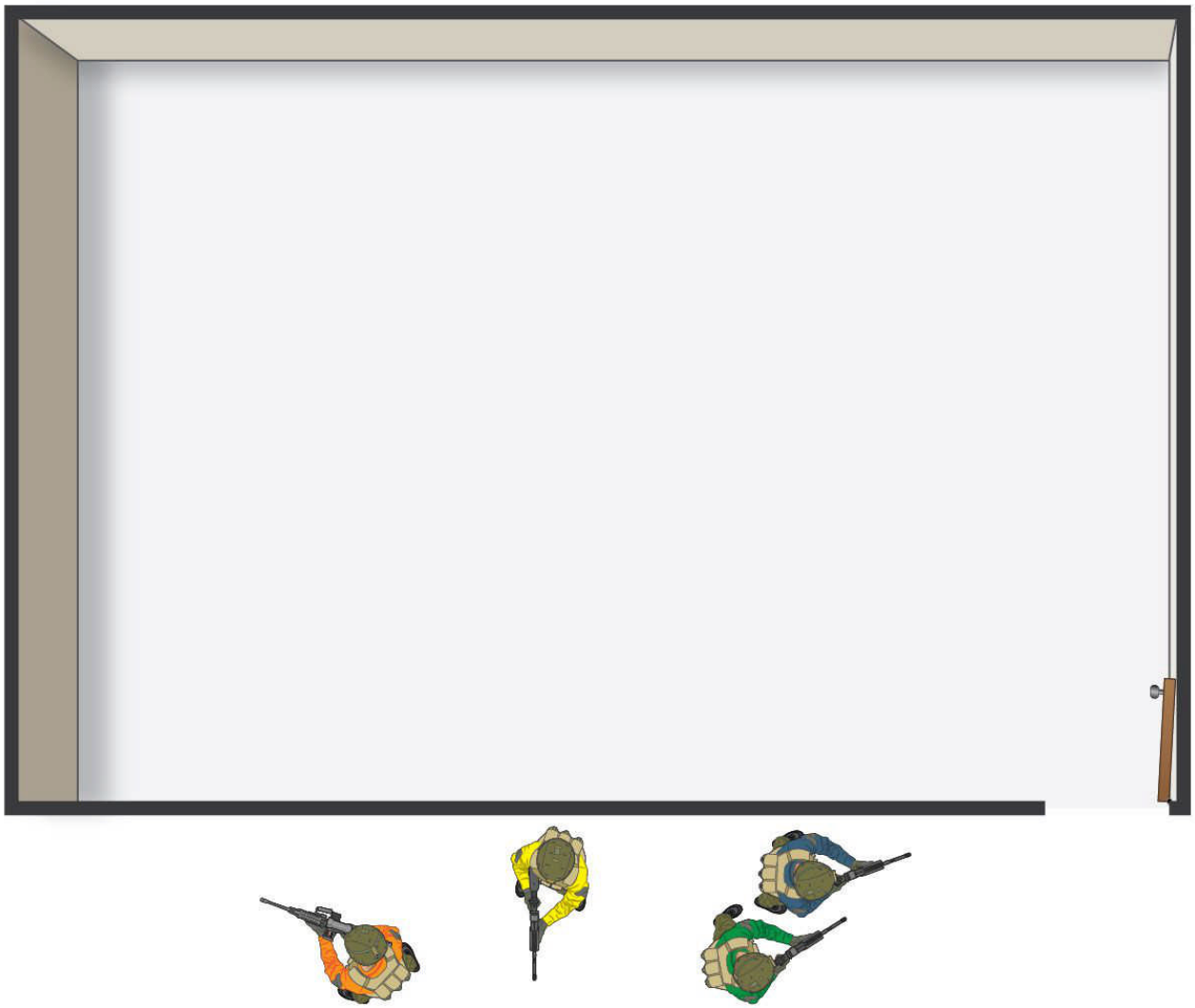
After the grenade is tossed into the room, the team should back away as much as possible to avoid being hit by shrapnel. Even if there is a wall between the team and the grenade, the wall might not be strong enough to protect against the explosion. Once the grenade goes off, the team will enter and clear the room using the technique of their choosing. The team should try to enter the room as quickly as possible after the grenade goes off in order to capitalize on the suppressive effects of the grenade. It is also important that the team member throwing the grenade use the few seconds before the grenade goes off to bring his/her weapon back to the ready position and prepare to enter the room.



# THROWING GRENADES THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 1 – Identify a Possible Threat

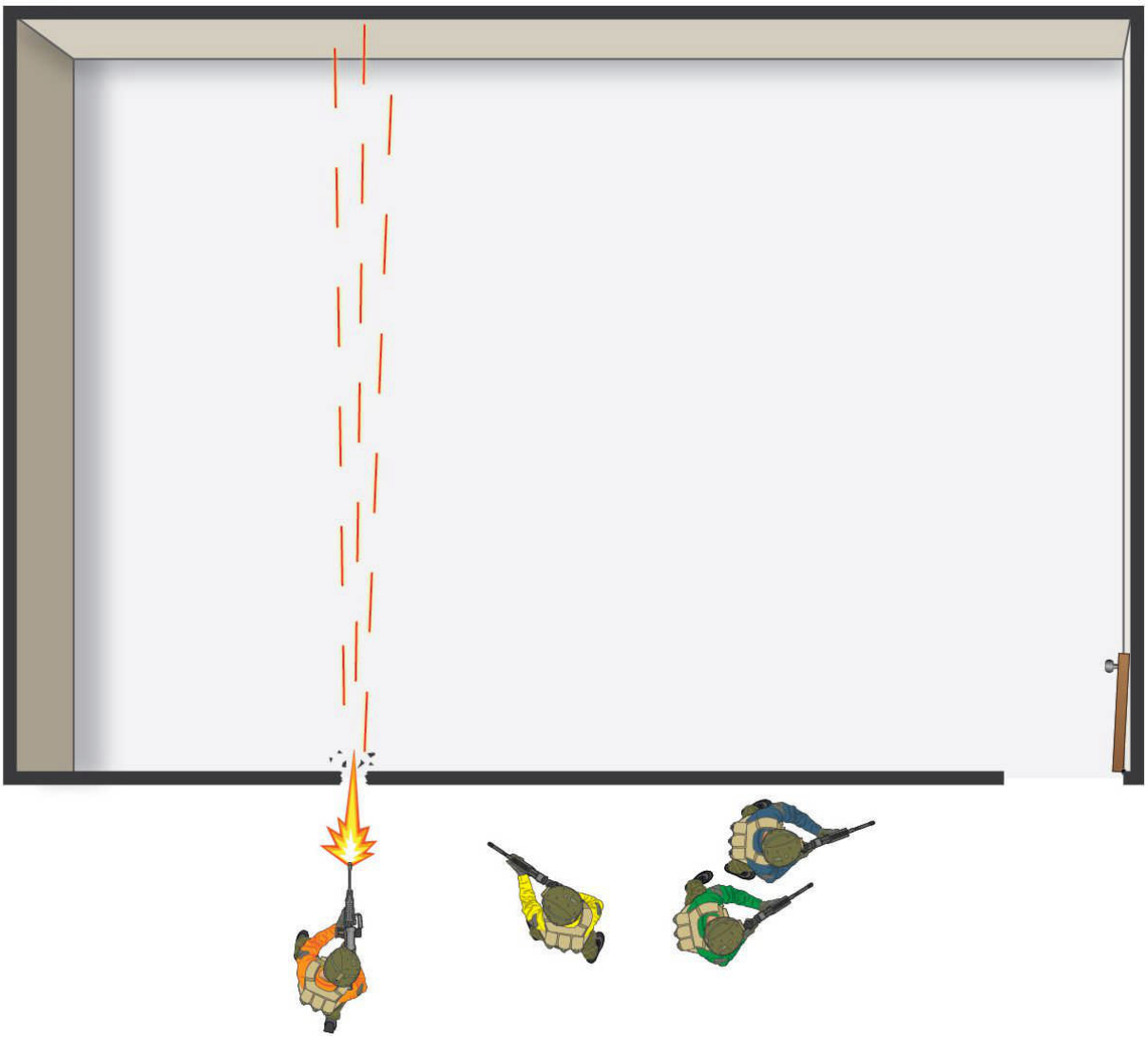
If the team identifies a possible threat in an adjacent room, it may be dangerous to attempt to throw a grenade through a doorway. Enemies inside the room will likely be watching the door and will open fire through the door and the walls around it as soon as they detect movement. Therefore, in some cases it might be preferable to throw the grenade through a hole in the wall instead.



# THROWING GRENADES THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 2 – Find or Create a Hole in the Wall

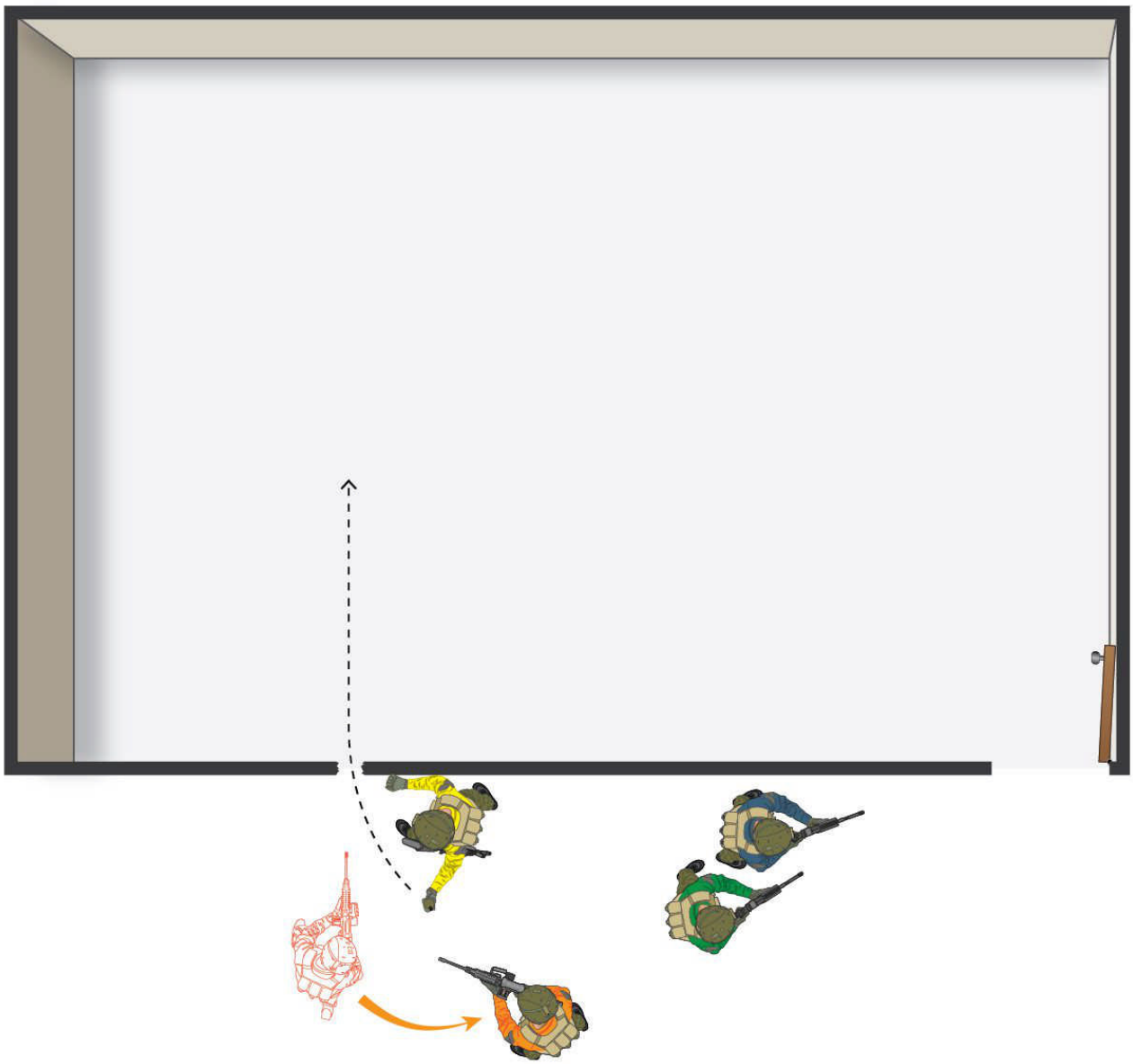
In some cases there may already be a hole in the wall, caused by previous battle damage. In other cases, the team can create a hole in the wall using tools, weapons or explosives. When punching a hole in a wall, it is important to remember that doing so can attract attention. For example, while it is possible to smash a hole in a wall with a sledgehammer or other breaching tools, the enemy will likely hear the banging and might fire through the wall. Making a hole in the wall with automatic fire can be more effective, since firing through the wall will suppress and distract any enemies inside. However, if the wall is weak enough for bullets to pass through, grenade shrapnel might pass through as well. There are no fixed formulas to guarantee safety but it is important to consider these factors before employing grenades.



# THROWING GRENADES THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 3 – Throw the Grenade Through the Hole

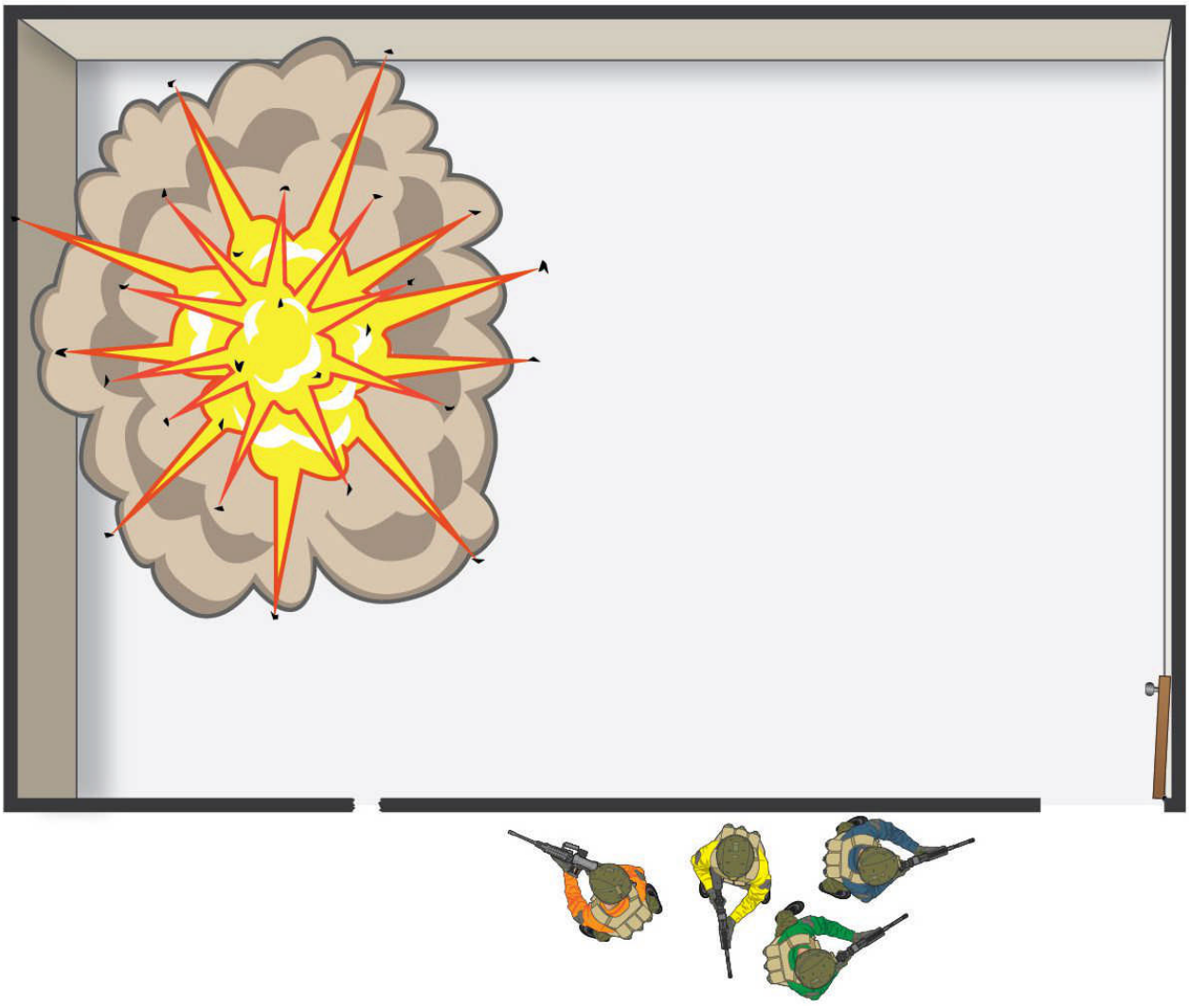
Once there is a large enough hole in the wall, the team member with the grenade should throw the grenade through the hole as forcefully as possible. The farther the grenade lands from the team, the less likely the team will be struck by grenade shrapnel. After throwing the grenade, all team members should back away from the hole since the enemy might fire back through it.



# THROWING GRENADES THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 4 – Prepare to Enter

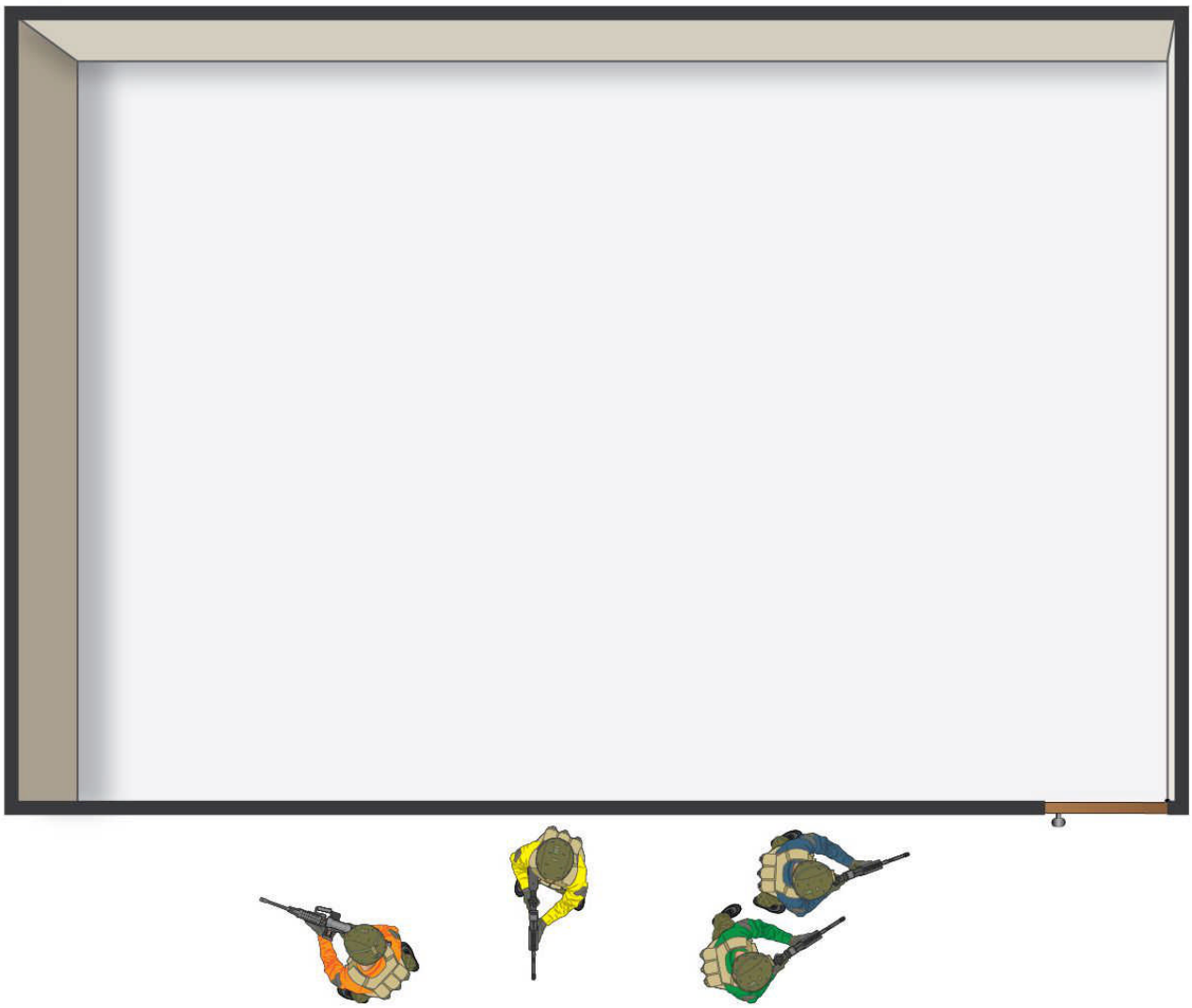
The team should move as far away from the grenade as possible before it goes off. Once it goes off, the team will enter the room through the doorway. It is also important to be ready to shoot enemies that come running out of the door in order to escape the grenade.



# MOUSE-HOLING THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 1 – Identify the Breach Point

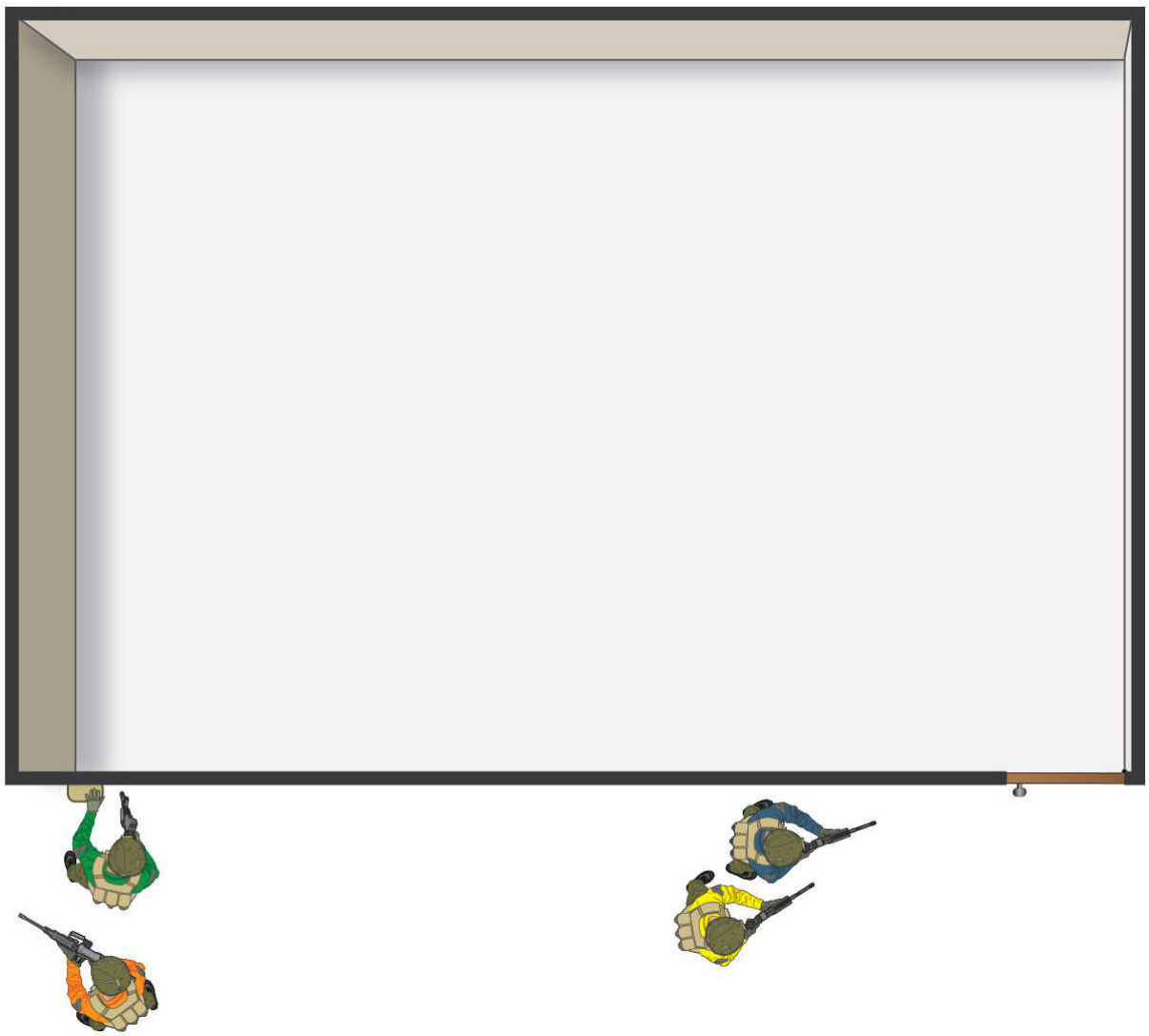
If the enemy has had time to prepare deliberate defenses, attempting to enter a room through the door can be dangerous. The enemy may booby-trap doors, barricade them or cover them with multiple weapon systems. For this reason, it is sometimes safer to enter a room through the wall when possible. This technique is sometimes called "mouse-holing." The first step is to identify the point in the wall to breach. If possible, it is best to breach the wall in the corner of the room, since entering a corner-fed room offers fewer angles to cover.



# MOUSE-HOLING THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 2 – Choose Breaching Method

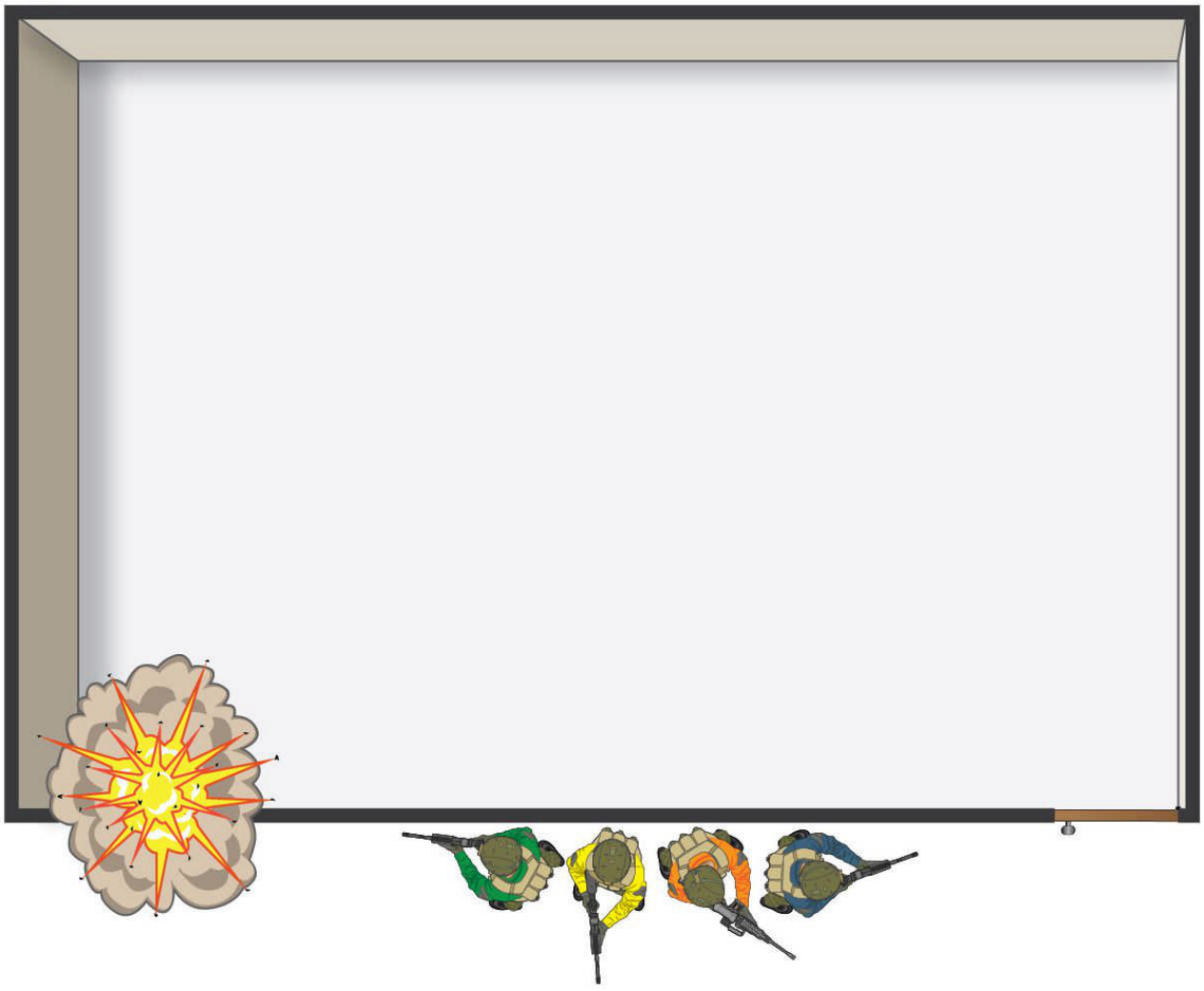
There are a number of possible ways to breach through a wall in conventional combat. Explosive breaching is a common technique among engineer units and specially trained assault units but is a difficult skill to apply effectively. Therefore, if trained breachers are available, explosive breach might be the best option. For a unit untrained in explosive breach, it might prove ineffective or dangerous. There are other ways to create holes in walls if units lack experience with explosives. Some tank rounds and other large-caliber munitions can punch a hole in a wall large enough to enter through. Vehicles can also drive through a wall. The key is to test various methods ahead of time. For example, some tank rounds will punch a very small hole through a wall that is not big enough to enter through.



# MOUSE-HOLING THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 3 – Move Away from the Breach Point

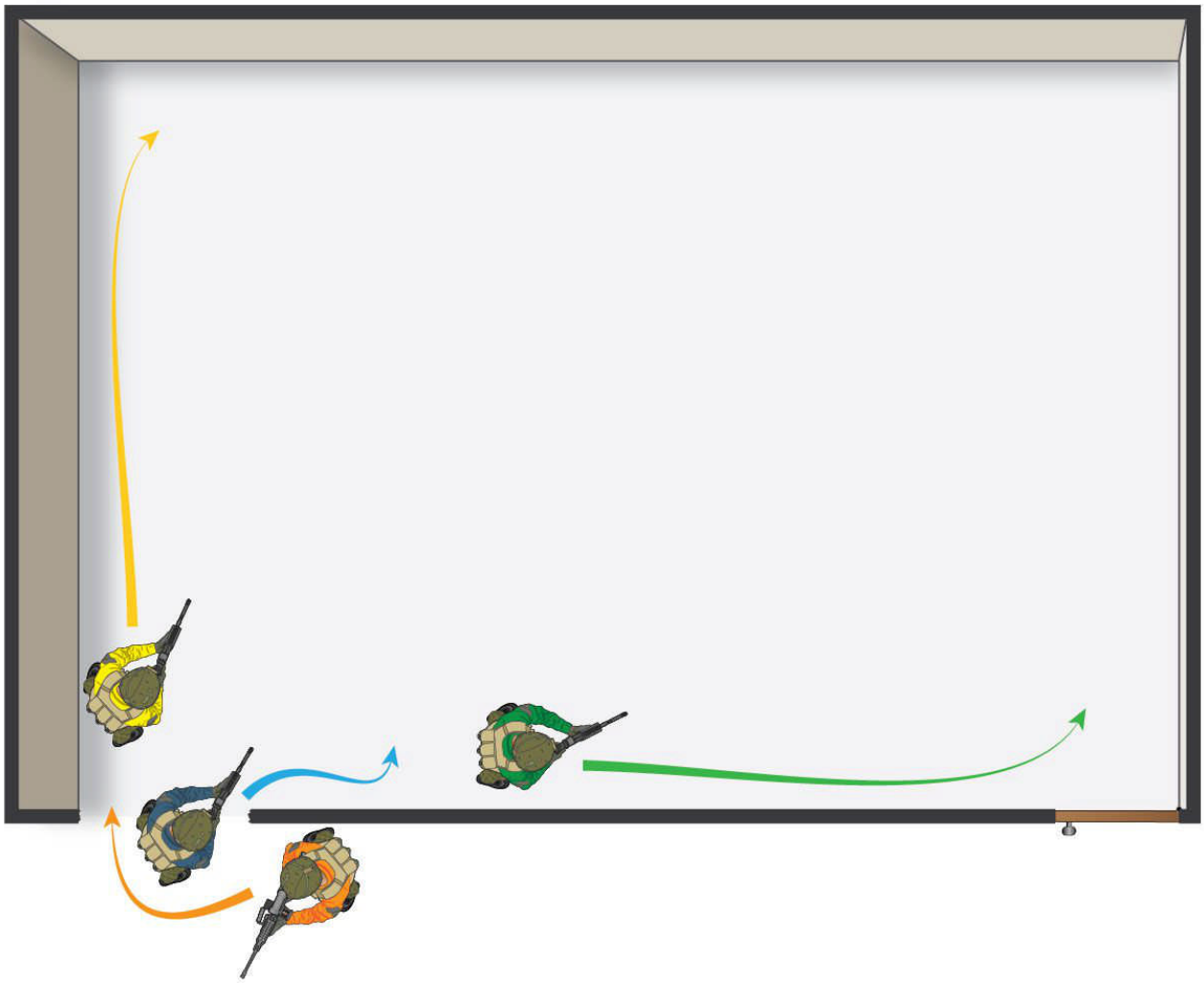
Whichever method the team chooses to execute the breach, it is generally important to move away from the breach point prior to entry. If the breaching method involves explosives or large-caliber projectiles, the team will want to stay away from the explosion. It is also important to remember that the energy from an explosion generally travels up or out and the team should position itself to be out of the way of the shock wave if possible.



# MOUSE-HOLING THROUGH WALLS

## STEP 4 – Enter and Clear

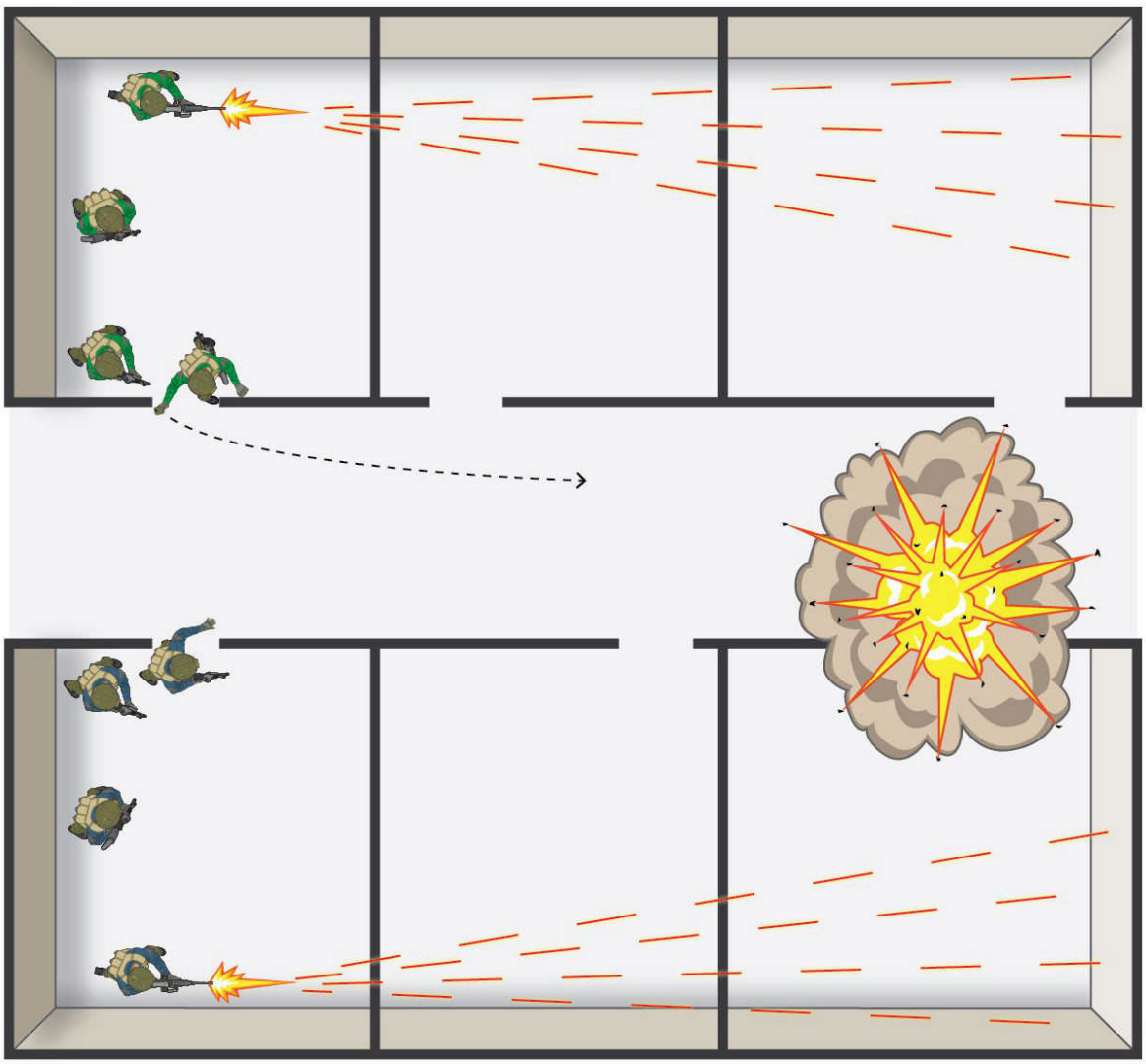
Once the wall is breached, the team will enter through the hole and clear the room. When moving through the hole it is important to remain alert and not stumble or become snagged on debris since the opening might be irregularly shaped. Making sure equipment, straps and wires are secured properly is particularly important when moving through holes in walls.



# GRENADES AND MACHINE GUNS IN HALLWAYS

## STEP 1 – Suppress and Throw Grenades

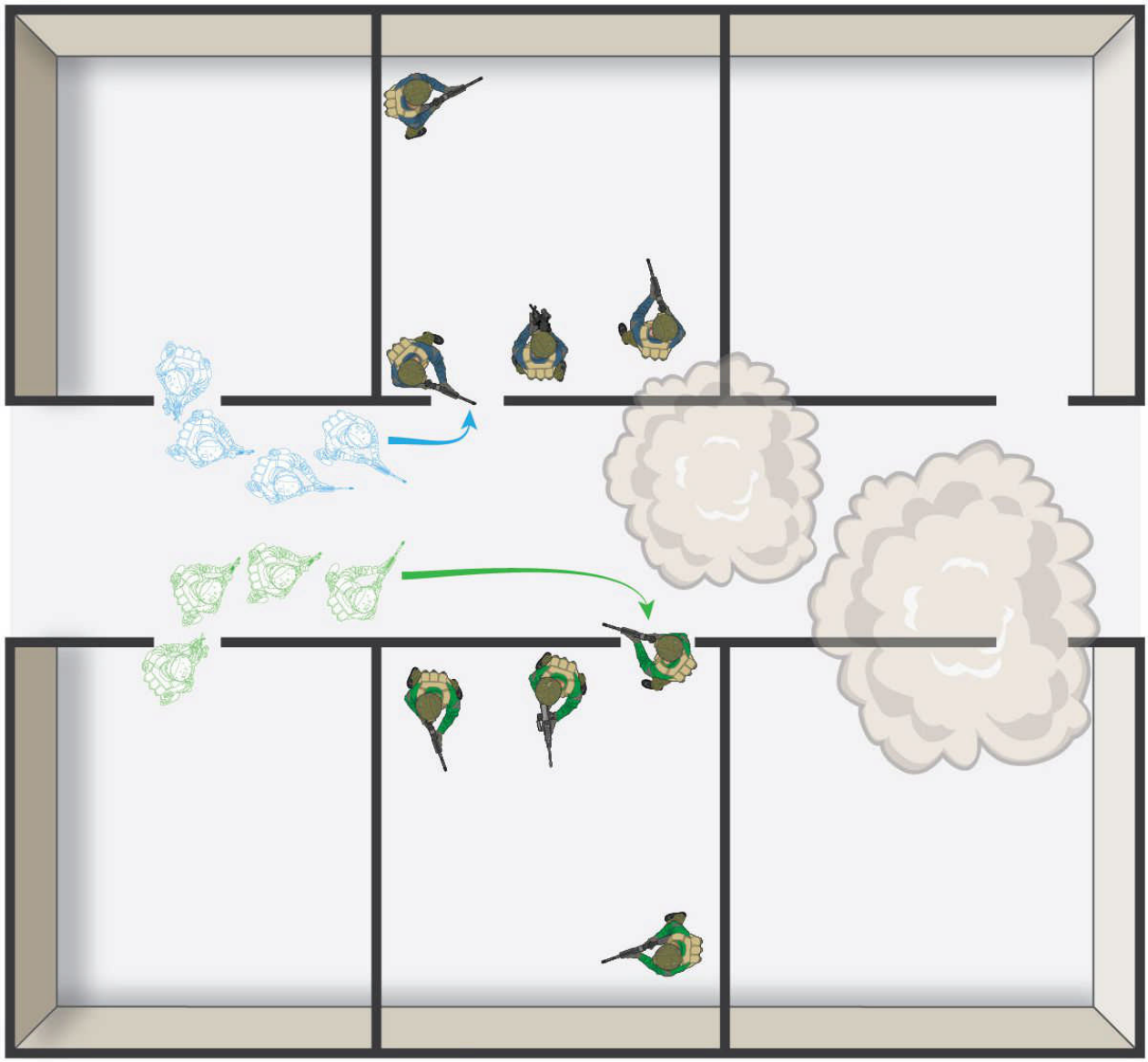
Moving down hallways can be particularly dangerous in high-intensity urban combat since the enemy can spray fire indiscriminately and toss grenades down the hall. However, if the squad beats the enemy to the punch by employing a high-volume of fire and explosives, the enemy may be suppressed and less capable of resistance. If the walls are weak enough, it is possible to suppress through the wall on both sides of the hallway. If grenades are detonating in the hallway, the enemy will feel trapped, increasing the level of suppression. It is also important to remember that it can be dangerous to throw a second grenade before the first grenade goes off, since the explosion of one grenade can kick the other back towards the team. Therefore, when throwing multiple grenades at once, it is preferable to throw them as far away as possible.



# GRENADES AND MACHINE GUNS IN HALLWAYS

## STEP 2 – Move Down the Hall

Once the squad achieves an acceptable level of suppression, it should move down the hall into the next set of rooms as quickly as possible. Team members can still fire forward down the hall if needed to maintain suppression. Once the squad enters the next set of rooms, the squad leader can assess the situation and repeat the process if necessary. It is also important to remember that even if there are no civilians on the battlefield, leaders must impose strict control measures to avoid fratricide whenever employing a high volume of automatic fire in an urban environment.



# HIGH INTENSITY URBAN COMBAT
## Special Terrain Considerations

Another factor that makes high-intensity urban combat unique is the effect of the urban terrain in a conventional fight. The intense employment of machine guns, artillery and explosives will greatly change the urban landscape. Military units used to clearing normal rooms in a counterinsurgency fight will be surprised when they open a door and nearly fall multiple stories down because there is a large hole in the floor or half of the building is gone. Buildings may be damaged, unstable, on fire, or filled with smoke. When buildings are completely destroyed, the tangled mass of rubble can provide even more effective defensive positions. Military units might benefit from talking with firefighters about how to move and operate in heavily damaged buildings.

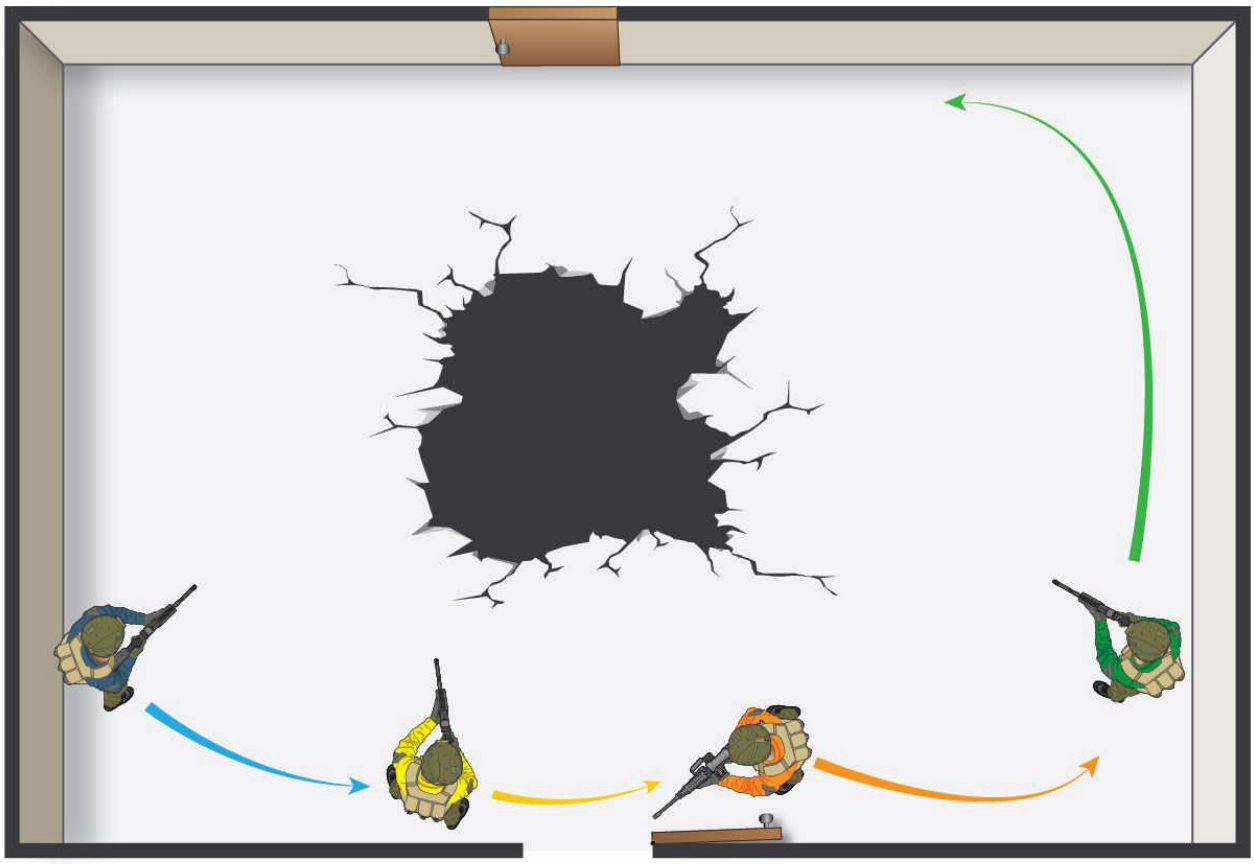
Enemy defensive measures will make the urban terrain even more complex. Enemies might create holes in the floor so they can drop grenades into the rooms below or cut holes in the walls to use as firing/observation ports. Enemies might booby-trap stairwells or rip out the stairs completely and instead rely on retractable rope ladders. Both sides will also avoid using doors if possible and instead use explosives, heavy shells or armored vehicles to "mouse-hole" through walls. Military units might want to study World War II battles to relearn many "dirty tricks" of urban combat that have not been used for decades.

Sewers, pipes, subway tunnels and other underground spaces will become much more important in conventional urban warfare since they offer hidden routes to move around the city without exposure to direct fire and artillery. However, these narrow passages can also become deathtraps if the enemy clears them using explosives or flamethrowers. Units preparing for conventional urban combat will need to learn, develop and practice new techniques for fighting and surviving underground.

# LARGE HOLES IN THE FLOOR OR CEILING

## STEP 1 – Dominate the Room

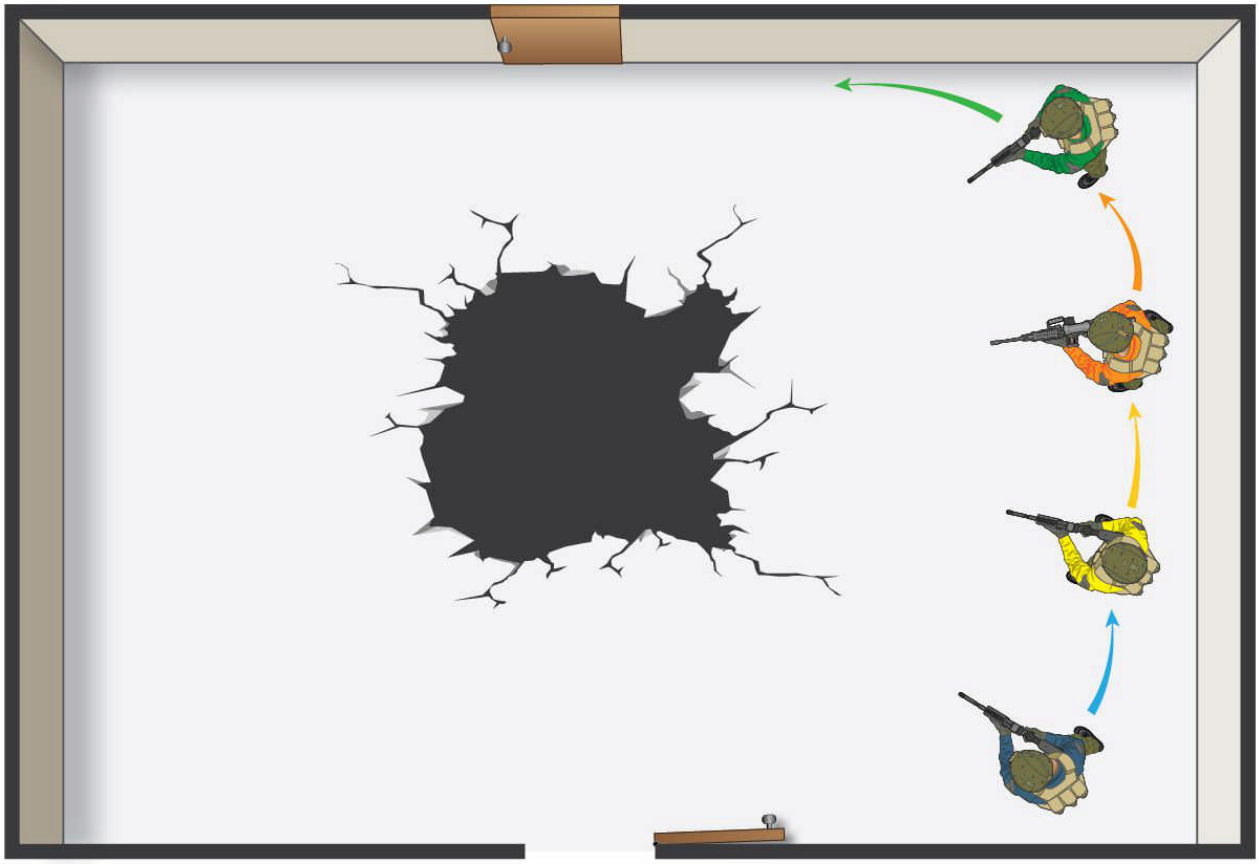
If the team enters a room and encounters a large hole in the floor or ceiling, this can present a serious danger for several reasons. Enemies on the upper/lower floor can fire through the hole from a number of different angles and surprise the team. Enemies can also toss or drop grenades through the hole. Therefore, the team should move through the room as quickly as possible to minimize exposure. It is generally best for the team to pick one side of the hole and all move laterally around the hole in that direction, maintaining spacing. The main reason for this is to minimize the chance of friendly fire. However, more experienced units may choose to split the team and send an element around in each direction. This is more dangerous but covers more angles through the hole.



# LARGE HOLES IN THE FLOOR OR CEILING

## STEP 2 – Team Moves Laterally Around the Hole

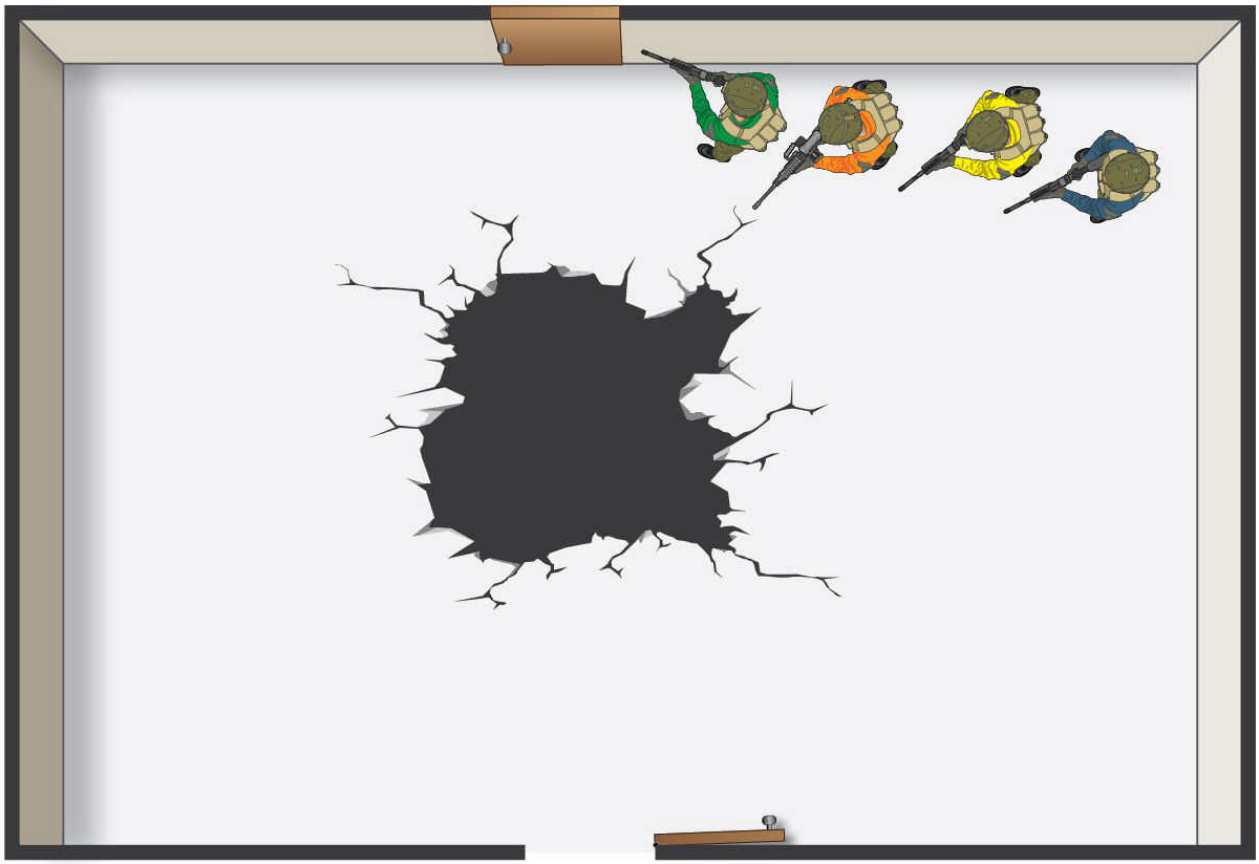
The team leader must pick the best direction to move around the hole. This is particularly important when the hole is in the floor since the floor might be sturdier on one side than the other side. Whenever there is a hole in the floor, there is a chance that the hole will grow bigger or part of the floor will collapse. This also makes it important for the team to keep as much distance from the hole as possible and choose the most sure footing when moving. If the hole is in the ceiling, the team should move in the direction that offers the best angles of observation of the upper floor.



# LARGE HOLES IN THE FLOOR OR CEILING

## STEP 3 – Consolidate on the Far Side

Once the team passes the hole and reaches the next entry door, it is important to turn and take a moment to scan the hole to ensure there are no enemies on the upper/lower floor waiting to shoot team members in the back as they enter through the next door.



# LARGE HOLES IN THE FLOOR OR CEILING

## STEP 4 – Prepare and Enter

If the upper/lower floor appears clear, the team should reposition to enter and clear the next room. At least one team member should maintain coverage on the hole.

# DESTROYED OR CRUMBLING WALLS

## Movement in a File Formation

In some cases, battle damage will have destroyed walls to the point where they provide very little cover or concealment. In these cases, it may not make sense to move through rooms or down hallways using the same cross-coverage or points-of-domination techniques since holes in the wall will always leave team members' backs exposed. In these cases it can be safer to move directly to the next covered position in a file formation. The first two team members should remain even with each other and face outward in opposite directions. Staying close together like this does make the lead team members more vulnerable to a single burst of fire, but it allows them to cover each other's backs. The rest of the team can spread out and will alternate cover sectors in order to provide 360-degree security for the team.

# DEBRIS, BARRICADES AND BOOBYTRAPS

## STEP 1 – Identify Potential Danger

Debris, barricades and booby traps can present a serious danger to the team. This is particularly the case when the enemy deliberately emplaces obstacles and booby traps in a way designed to draw the team into a trap. For example, the enemy might barricade all but one door, forcing the team to move through a door that is booby-trapped or covered by an automatic weapon. When encountering obstacles, it is critical to determine if they might suggest the presence of a trap or a prepared enemy defense.

# DEBRIS, BARRICADES AND BOOBYTRAPS

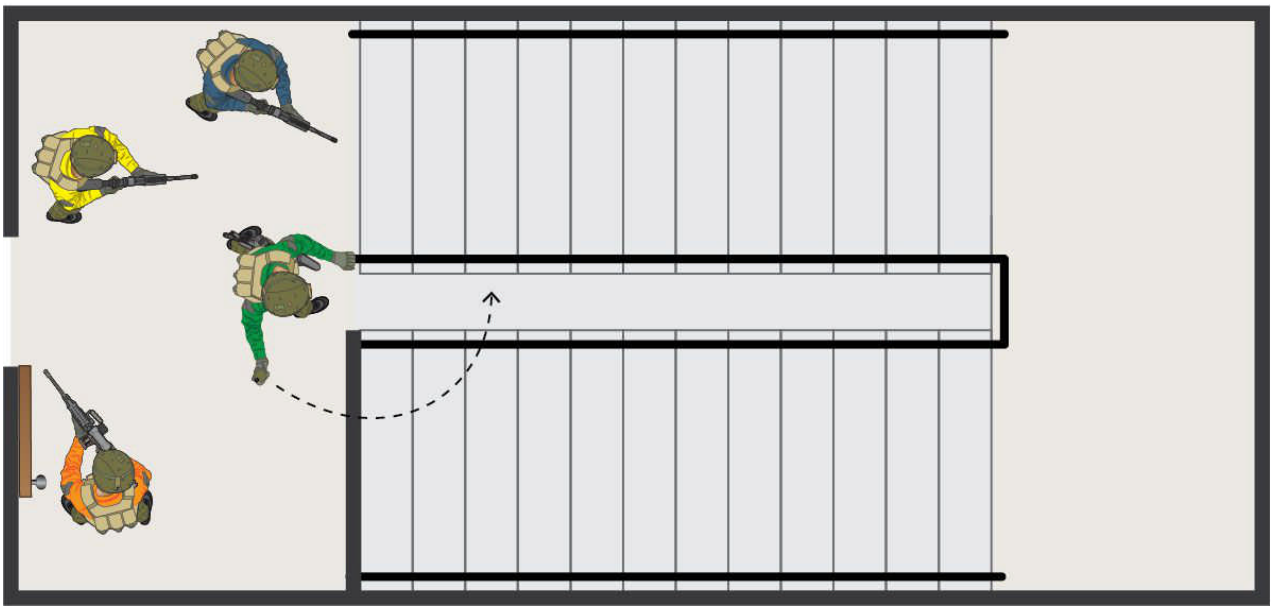
## STEP 2 – Pull Back to Re-Engage

Therefore, if the team enters a building or room and it appears as if the enemy has taken time to establish a trap or prepared defensive position, it is probably best to fall back and attempt to approach the room or building from a different angle, rather than to walk into a trap. If a building is a heavily defended mass of obstacles, traps and fortified positions, it might not be worth entering the building at all. Attempting to destroy the entire building with artillery or air strikes might be a better option. However, if a team has no choice but to enter and clear a building with many barricades and potential traps, the team should employ as much firepower and as many fragmentation grenades as possible. Specially trained units like engineers may also have a better chance of identifying and avoiding booby traps.

# GRENADES IN STAIRWELLS

## Dropping Grenades Down the Stairs

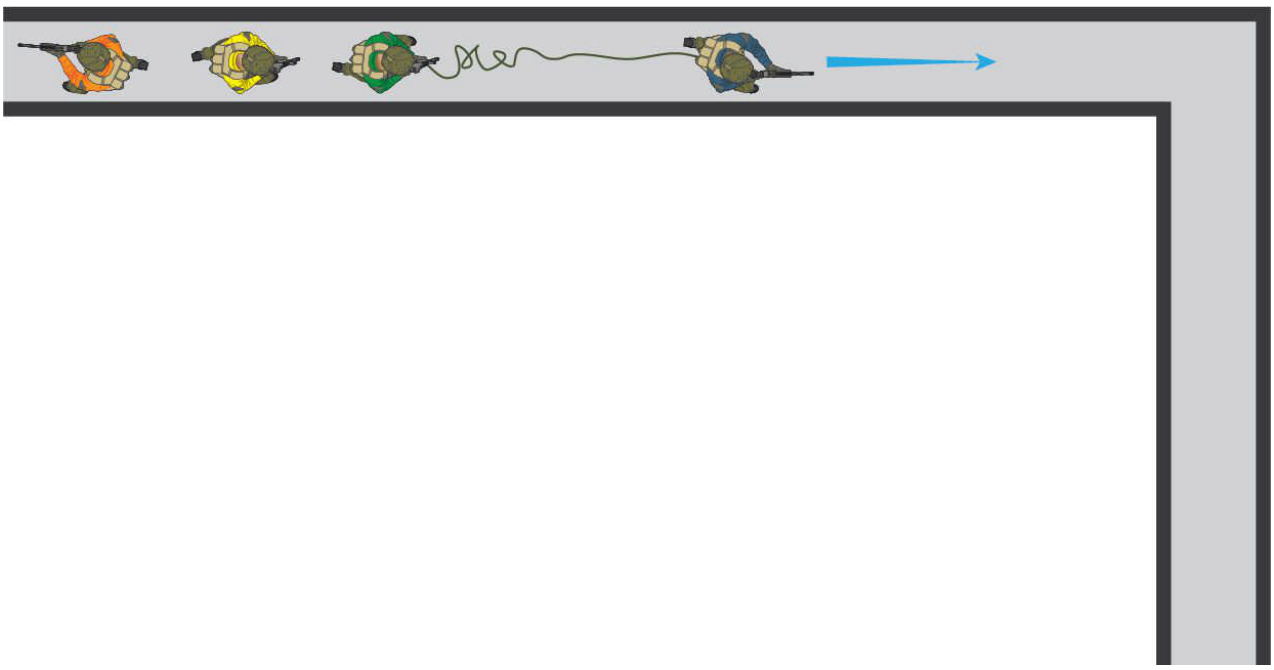
Stairwells are particularly dangerous in high-intensity combat because of how easy it is to drop a grenade down the shaft of the stairwell. It is generally better to drop the grenade down the shaft, rather than bounce it down the stairs. Dropping the grenade down the shaft will allow it to travel further away from the team. Since stairwells are typically constructed with sturdy materials and steel beams, shrapnel can ricochet long distances in the stairwell and it is better for the explosion to be as far away as possible. The team should never throw a grenade up a stairwell since there is a high probability that it will roll back down.



# TUNNELS, PIPES AND SEWERS

## STEP 1 – Send One Scout Forward

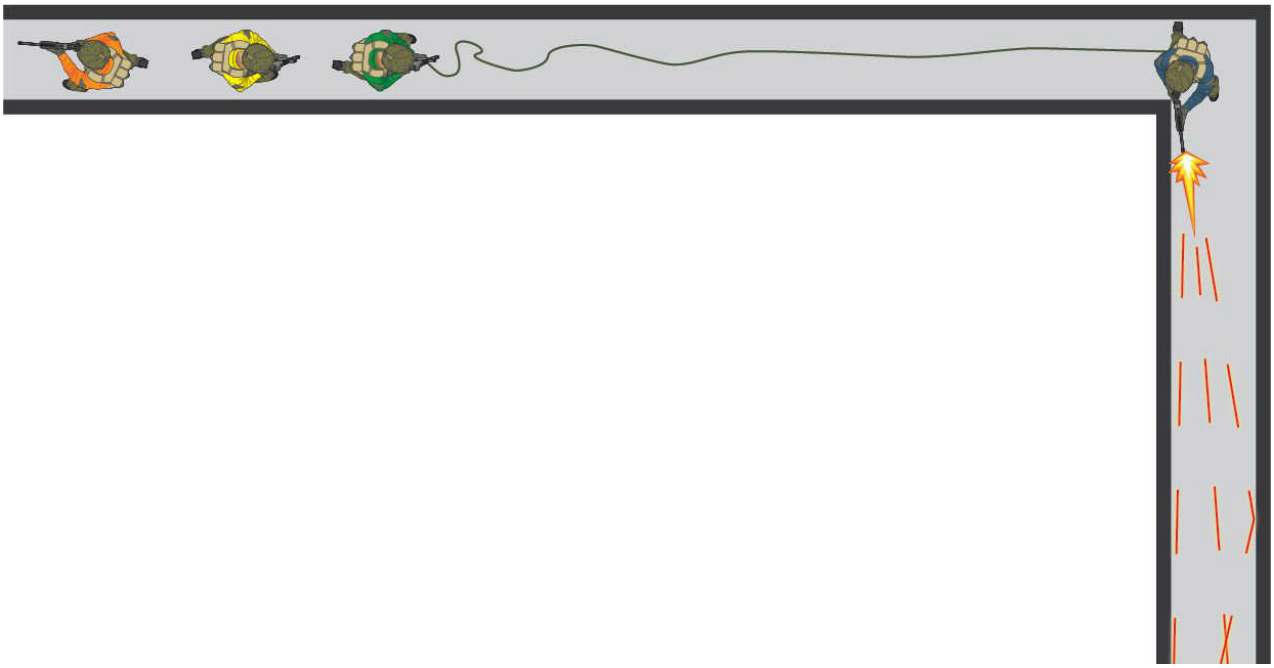
Historical case studies show that high-intensity urban warfare typically includes underground combat engagements. In some cases, combat will take place in existing underground passages like pipes and sewers. Some urban environments have very extensive sewer and drainage systems that run to every corner of the city. These passages can prove extremely useful for conducting reconnaissance, secretly repositioning small units, moving supplies etc. In other cases, military forces will dig their own tunnels and underground defensive positions. Either way, both sides will often seek to capture and control underground passageways. Moving in confined spaces underground is extremely dangerous. Therefore, when operating underground units should remain as small as possible. In addition, it is often best to send a single scout forward of the main element to clear passageways and corners. It is very dangerous for a single scout to advance alone but if the team moves as a unit, the entire team could be easily wiped out by a single grenade or burst of automatic fire in the confined space. To reduce the risk for the scout, it is useful to attach the scout to a long lanyard of 1/2 tubular nylon. This will allow the team to drag the scout out of danger if he/she is injured and can also help the scout find his/her way back to the team in complex passages. When moving underground it is preferable to use night vision devices instead of white light since lights will give away the team's position. If the team must use white light, it should be used as briefly as possible.



# TUNNELS, PIPES AND SEWERS

## STEP 2 – Scout Clears the Corner

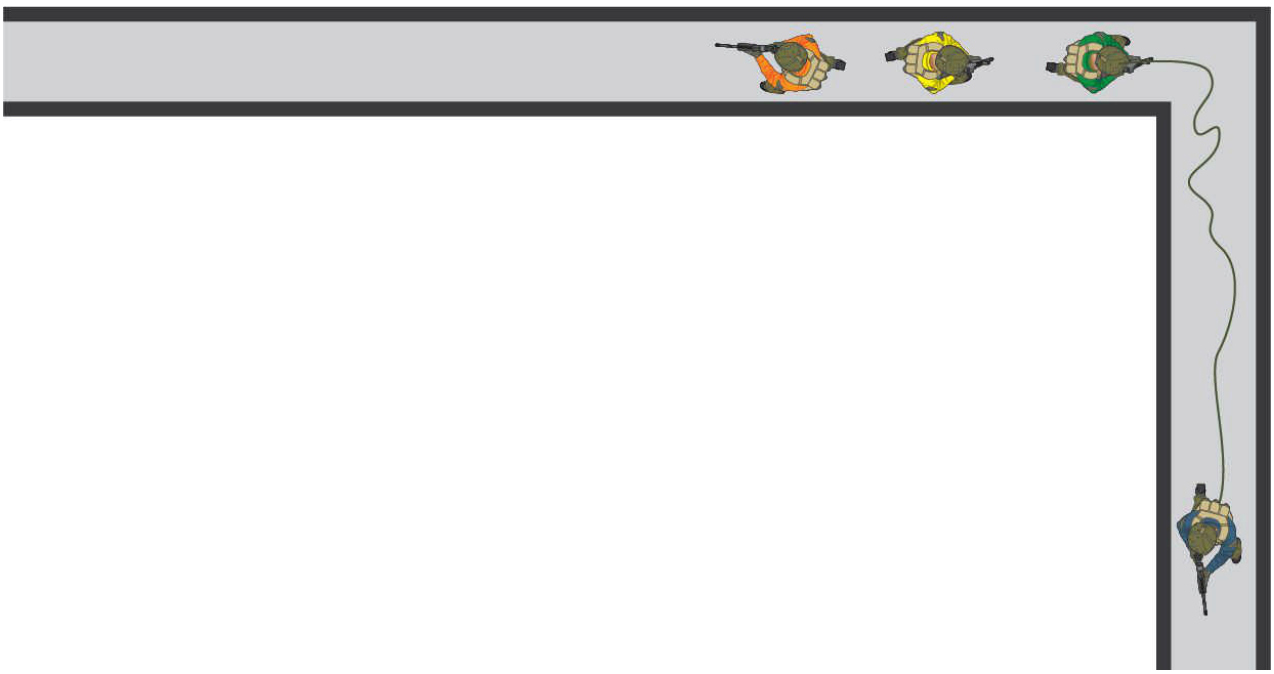
Eventually, the scout will encounter a corner or intersection in the passageway. The scout will have no choice but to quickly come around the corner and clear the passageway of enemies. This can be done visually but it is sometimes best to immediately fire a burst around the corner. While this might alert enemies to the team's presence, it will reduce the chances that the scout will be shot coming around the corner. The scout can also toss a grenade around the corner, as long as he/she throws it as far as possible and then moves back to avoid the shrapnel. If the team has special cameras or robots these can prove very helpful for clearing underground passages while reducing the team's exposure.



# TUNNELS, PIPES AND SEWERS

## STEP 3 – Team Continues Movement

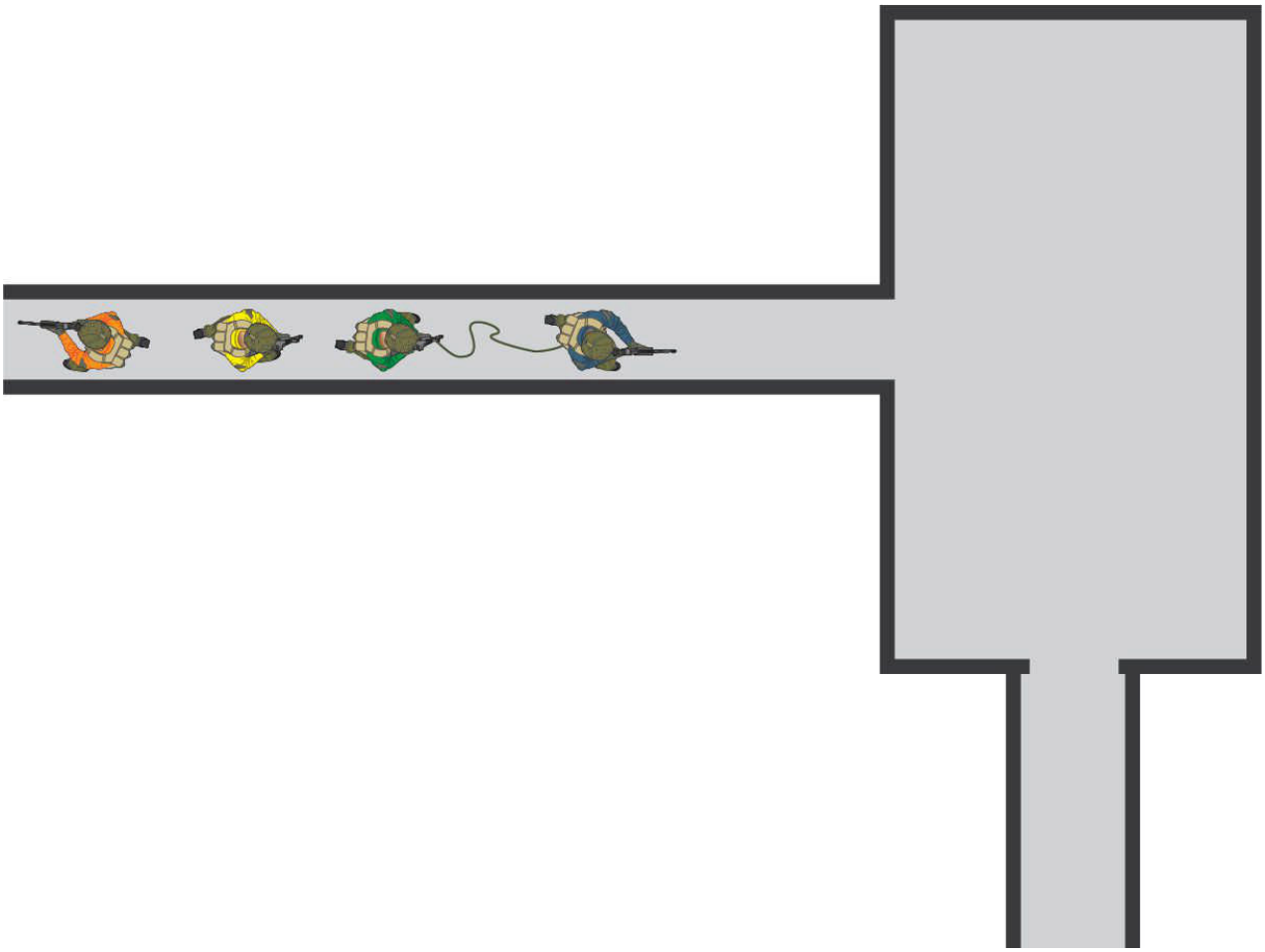
Once the corner or intersection is clear, the scout will continue to lead the way in the desired direction of travel. When possible, the team should stay back behind the protection of the corner until the lanyard runs out of length. Once again, this will prevent a burst of fire from traveling down the passageway and killing the entire team.



# UNDERGROUND COMPARTMENTS

## STEP 1 – Send Scout Forward to Clear Compartment

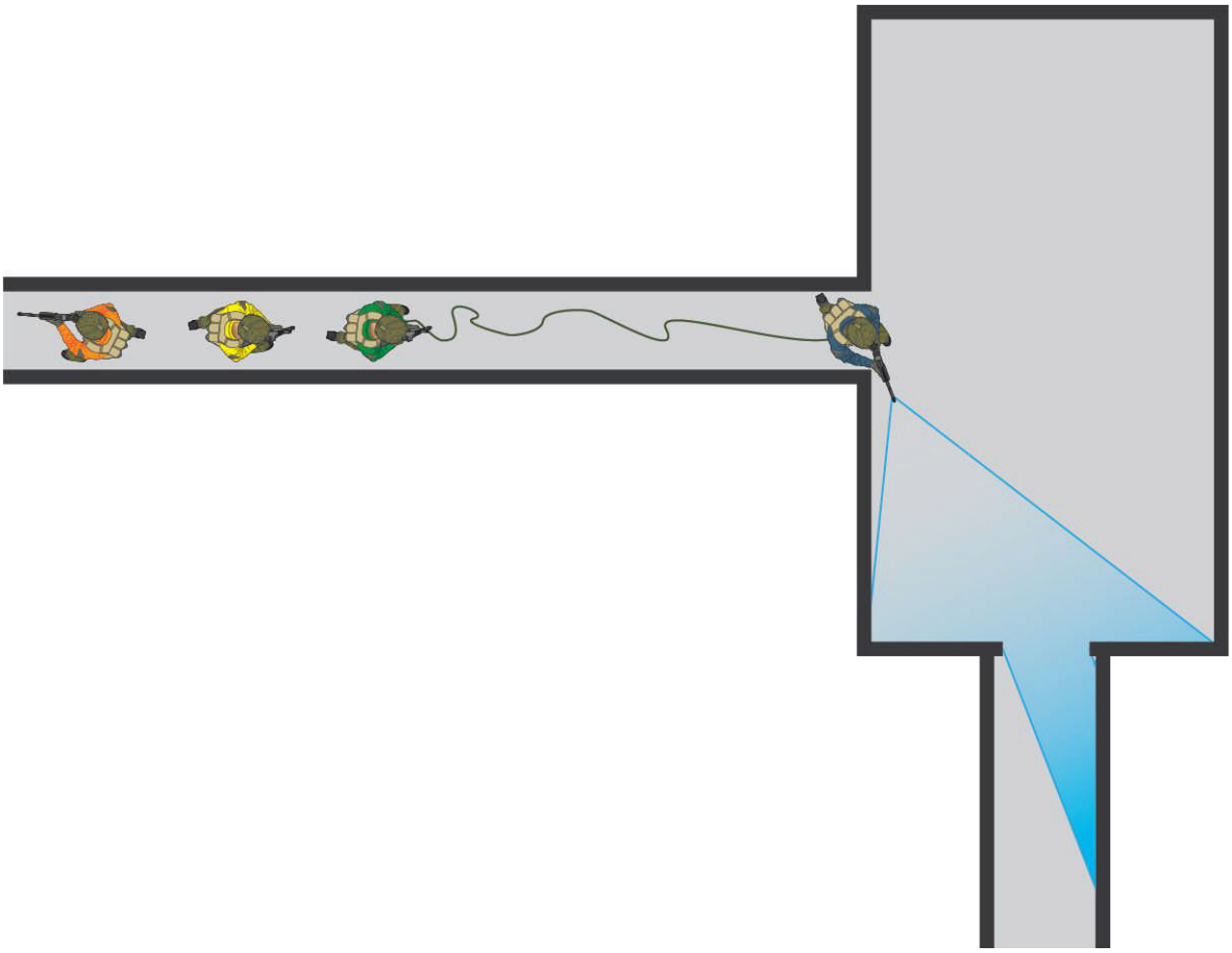
Underground passageways, especially tunnel systems built by the enemy, will typically start out very narrow and then widen into larger compartments. Sometimes this is to make the entrance to a tunnel system easy to conceal. In other cases, narrower sewers and drain pipes will need to get bigger as more sources of flow combine from various directions. Either way, the team must be prepared to clear underground compartments. The first step is to send the scout forward towards the opening while the rest of the team stays back at a safe distance.



# UNDERGROUND COMPARTMENTS

## STEP 2 – Clear One Side

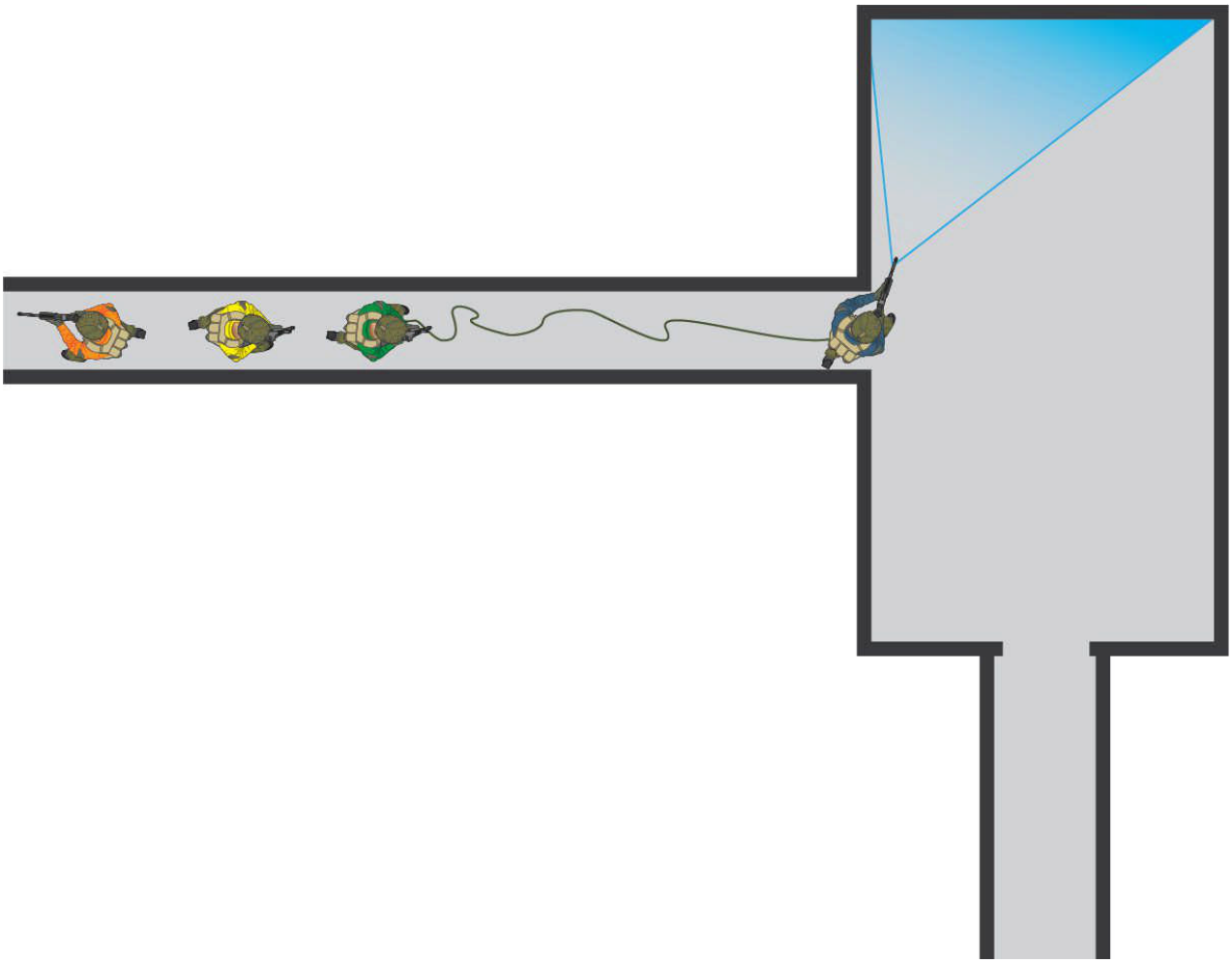
As the scout reaches the opening, he/she will clear one side first, making sure to see all the way into the corner. If the space is very confined, the scout may prefer to use a pistol if one is available. This is also an occasion when the scout might decide to use white light.



# UNDERGROUND COMPARTMENTS

## STEP 3 – Clear the Other Side

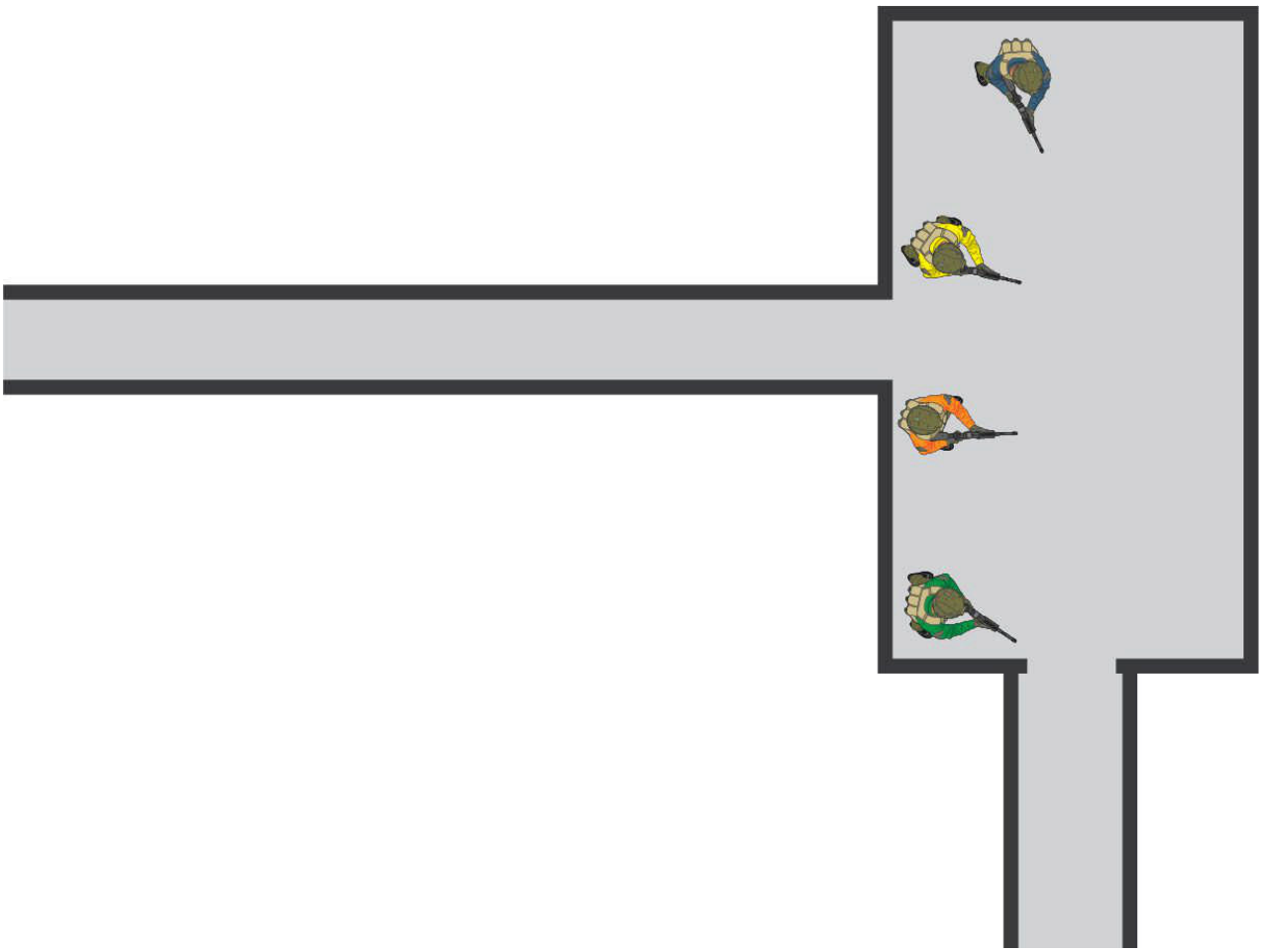
Once the scout has cleared one corner, he/she must turn as quickly as possible to clear the opposite corner. This can be very difficult in a confined space but it is critical to clear both sides quickly to prevent an enemy hiding in the corner from shooting the scout in the back.



# UNDERGROUND COMPARTMENTS

## STEP 4 – Dominate the Compartment

Once the scout completes the initial clear, he/she can signal the rest of the team forward to dominate the compartment. When clearing an underground compartment it is critical to search every corner since there may be small openings or pipes where an enemy could be hiding. It is also critical to always look up to see if there are any openings or manhole covers above the team. It is very easy for an enemy to drop a grenade down into an underground compartment.



# HIGH-INTENSITY URBAN COMBAT
## Defense Fundamentals

Defensive operations are a critical part of any high-intensity urban fight. There are many different techniques for establishing and strengthening an urban defense. Platoon and company urban combat manuals will go into more detail on the specifics of these techniques but this section will cover some of the basics of urban defense at the squad level.

Squad-level urban defensive positions fall into two categories: hasty and deliberate. A hasty defensive position is established when the squad or team must immediately adopt a defensive posture without any time or resources for preparation. A hasty defensive position might be part of a larger deliberate defense, or it might be intended to buy time to treat a casualty, detain a prisoner, establish radio communications or conduct a map check etc.

When a squad has more time to prepare, it may choose to establish a deliberate defense. Many of the steps for establishing a deliberate defense in an urban environment are similar to the steps for preparing a defense in a rural environment. However, the complexity of urban terrain offers additional opportunities for deception and creative schemes.

A cunning defender can turn an ordinary building into a web of interconnected obstacles and traps, designed to draw the enemy into a vulnerable position. However, it is important to remember that making a defensive position too strong might just encourage the enemy to avoid it altogether. In some cases that might be the objective. In other cases, it can be useful to leave openings or "lures" to trick the enemy into attacking the position and walking into a trap.

# HASTY DEFENSE

## Cross Coverage on Multiple Openings

In some cases, the team may need to establish a hasty defensive position in a room. This might be part of a larger deliberate defense, or it might be to buy time to treat a casualty, detain a prisoner, establish communications or conduct a map check etc. To establish a hasty defense, ideally two team members should cover each door from opposite sides, establishing cross coverage. It is best for the two team members to position themselves to see as far into the corners of the next room as possible, while keeping some distance from the door. This will help avoid the "fatal funnel" around the doorway where bullets are likely to concentrate. However, team members should still sweep around momentarily to visually check doorways or other entrances into the adjacent room. It is helpful if these doorways are closed so the team will hear them opening and have time to respond. Also, if an enemy is able to run through the door quickly, there is a risk of friendly fire. To avoid this, team members should sweep out to engage the enemy before he/she can get close to the door.

# DELIBERATE DEFENSE

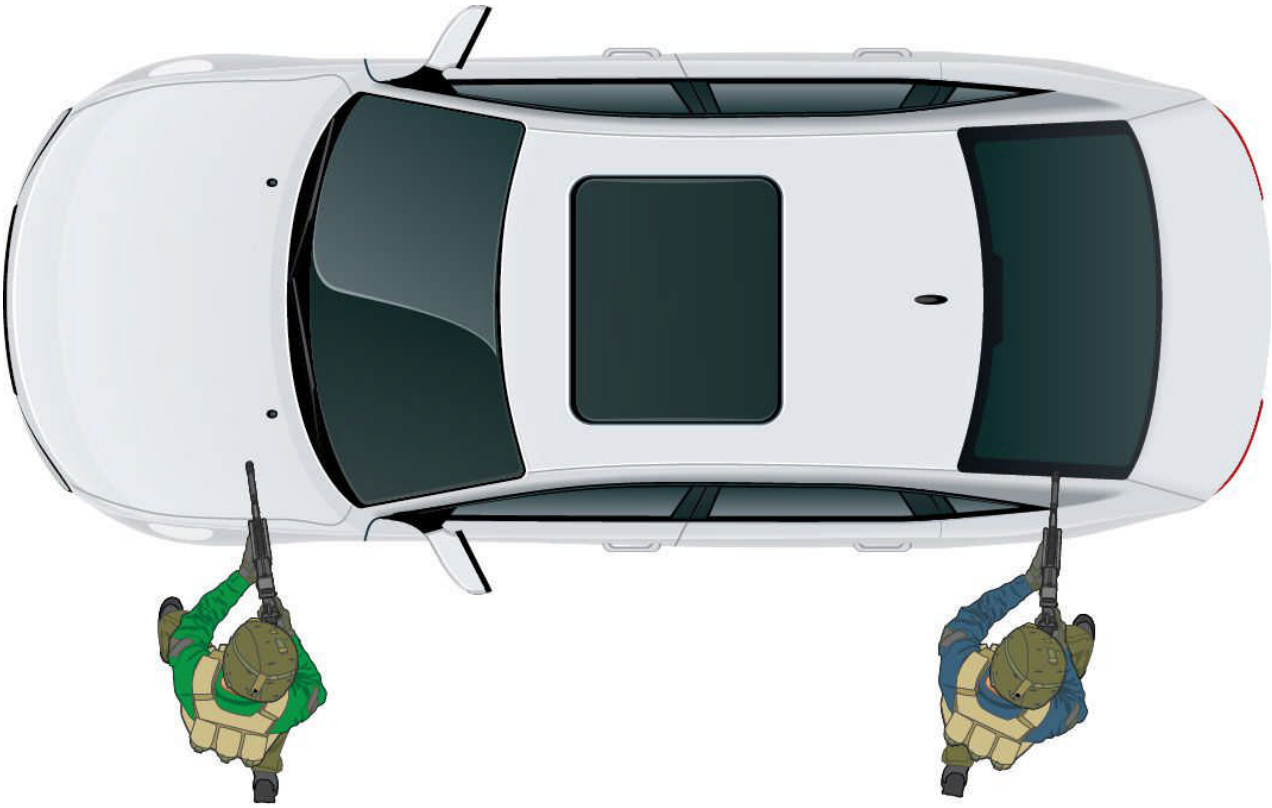
## Windows, Obstacles and Defensive Preparations

When firing out of windows, team members should stay back, away from the window or they will be easily seen and engaged from the outside. However, on upper floors this means that team members may need to stand on desks, tables or platforms in order to see down to the street. Another option is to make small holes in the wall to use as firing ports. It can be helpful to stack sandbags around these firing ports to protect against incoming fire. Cutting holes in the floor can also be useful. If enemies enter on the ground floor the team can see them and even drop grenades through the floor on top of the enemy. However, it is critical to ensure the floor is strong enough to prevent shrapnel from exploding upwards and hitting the team. The team can also set up sandbags or other improvised covered positions, like filling a refrigerator with dirt and laying it on its side. Placing debris on the ground inside the door can cause an enemy assault team to stumble as they enter and make it more difficult for them to aim accurately. Placing debris or broken glass outside the doorway can make it more difficult for enemies to approach the door without making noise. These are just a few examples of techniques a squad can use to improve an urban deliberate defensive position.

# USING VEHICLES FOR COVER

## Firing from Behind a Vehicle

When taking cover behind a vehicle, team members should position themselves behind the engine block and/or wheel-well. The engine block of a car provides the best ballistic protection. The wheels and wheel-wells can protect the legs and lower body of a crouching team member. Bullets have a tendency to skip underneath cars. If a bullet strikes the pelvic girdle or the femoral artery in the leg, the wound can be fatal. Therefore, it is important to protect the legs and lower body by positioning behind the vehicle's wheel well. If the vehicle's doors are open, it is best to close them (as shown in the illustration below) to provide added protection against bullets.



# HIGH-INTENSITY URBAN COMBAT
## Casualty Evacuation and Carry

Dealing with civilian casualties or injured team members is one of the most challenging scenarios the team will face. While other manuals will cover tactical medical skills in more detail, this section provides the basic fundamentals for how to get an injured person to safety in an emergency situation.

If the team suffers a casualty, the first priority is to win the fight and secure the area. If all team members drop their coverage and focus on the casualty, there is an increased chance of taking another casualty. The critical concern for the team is making sure the casualty is safe. In many cases, this can be accomplished without moving the casualty. Team members can simply lock down the room and call in the medic. This is generally the best option since moving a casualty with a c-spine injury can be dangerous or fatal.

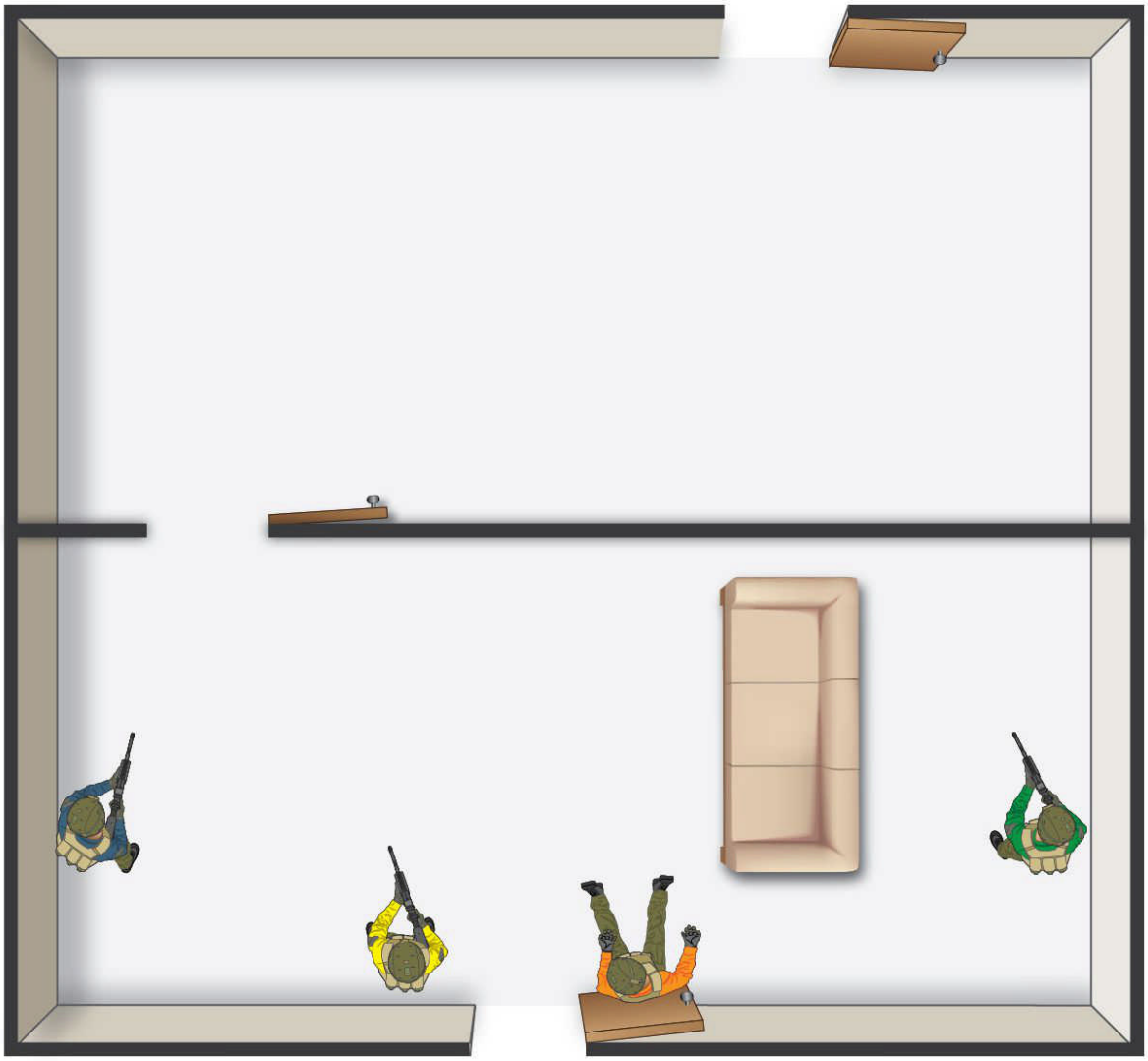
However, if there is no emergency medical support available and the casualty is in imminent danger, a team member may need to drag the casualty to a safer location where it is possible to administer medical aid. In this situation, the team member should first call for assistance over the radio. If possible, a team member should not attempt to provide medical aid under direct hostile fire. There is also no need to lift or carry the casualty. This can be difficult and dangerous, especially in the dark. All the team member needs to do is drag the casualty behind the nearest cover. This can be accomplished from a crouching position if necessary.

The team member can drag the casualty by grabbing the casualty under the arms or knees. If there are two team members present, one of the most effective techniques is to use a two-person carry, grabbing the casualty under both the arms and knees at the same time. Once the casualty is behind cover, the team member can begin to provide medical assistance, while remaining alert for other threats in the area.

# EVACUATING A CASUALTY UNDER FIRE

## STEP 1 – Dominate the Room

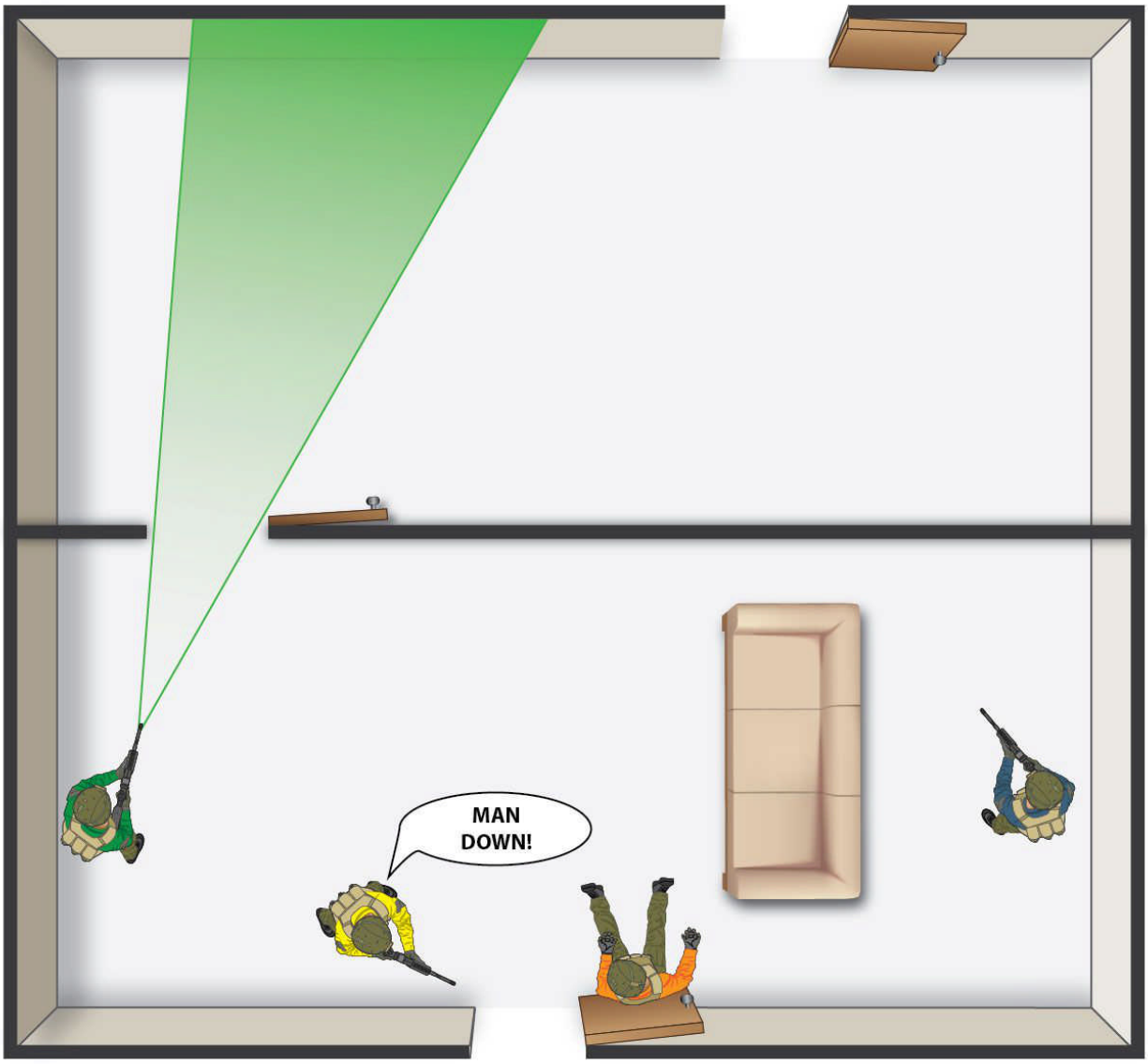
If the team enters a room and takes a casualty, it is critical that the team not stop fighting. The primary objective must be to eliminate the threat and prevent more casualties. Once the room is dominated, the team leader must immediately communicate that a team member is down and needs medical assistance. If there are trail teams available, the lead team can continue to clear while the trail teams take care of the casualties. If no trail teams are available, the team will have to evacuate its own casualty.



# EVACUATING A CASUALTY UNDER FIRE

## STEP 2 – Provide Cover for the Evacuation

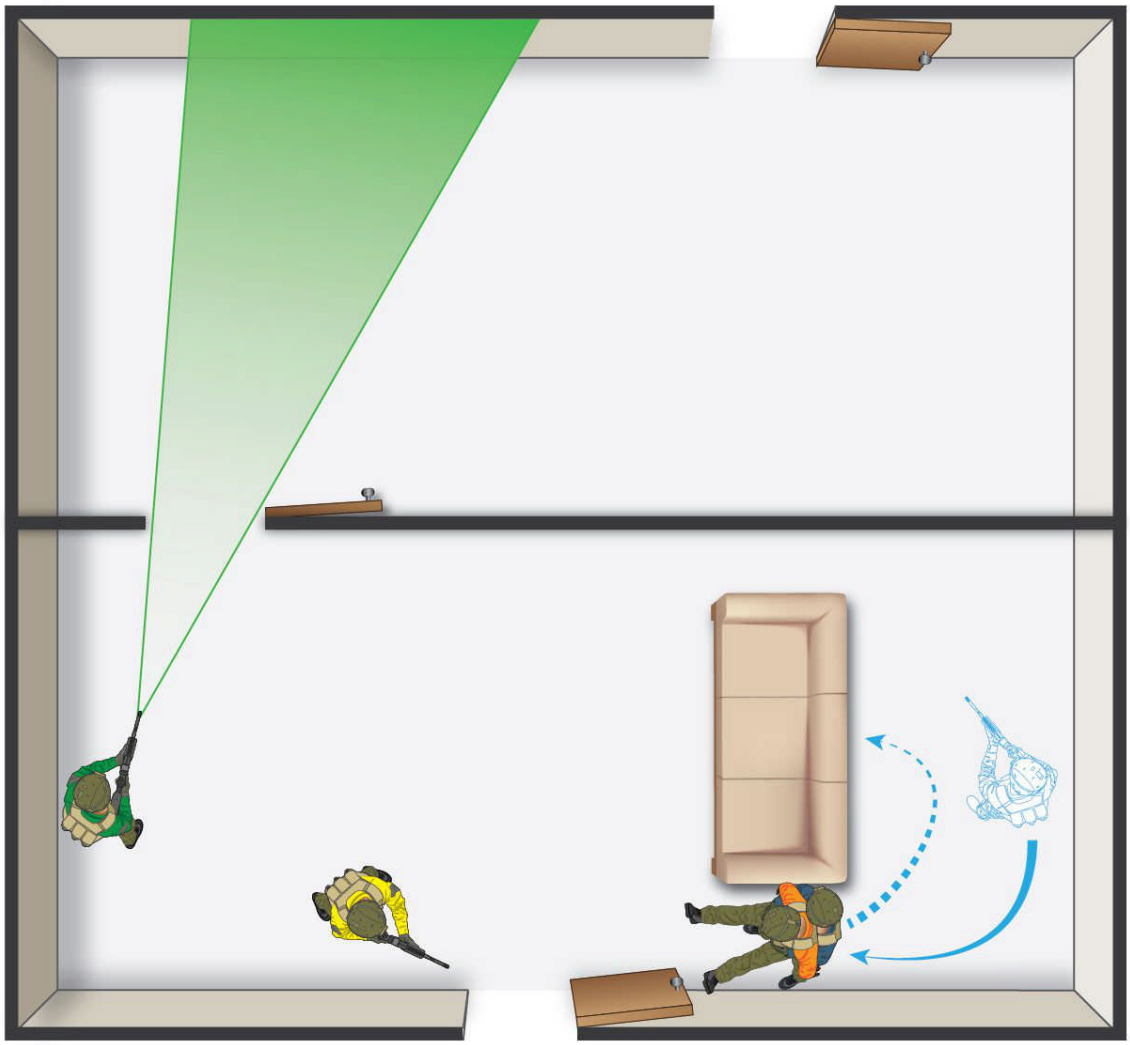
As soon as the team identifies the casualty, at least one team member will move to a good position to protect the casualty from enemy fire. The covering team members will face outward to cover doors or danger areas.



# EVACUATING A CASUALTY UNDER FIRE

## STEP 3 – Drag the Casualty to Safety

Once cover is established, at least one (preferably two) team members will drag the casualty to a safer location. This could mean dragging the casualty out of the building, back to another room, or even into the corner of the room or behind a piece of furniture. The objective is not to drag the casualty far but to simply get the casualty out of the line of fire. If there is no incoming hostile fire, it is best to leave the casualty in place and form a perimeter or defensive position around the casualty.



# SNIPER CASUALTY RESCUE

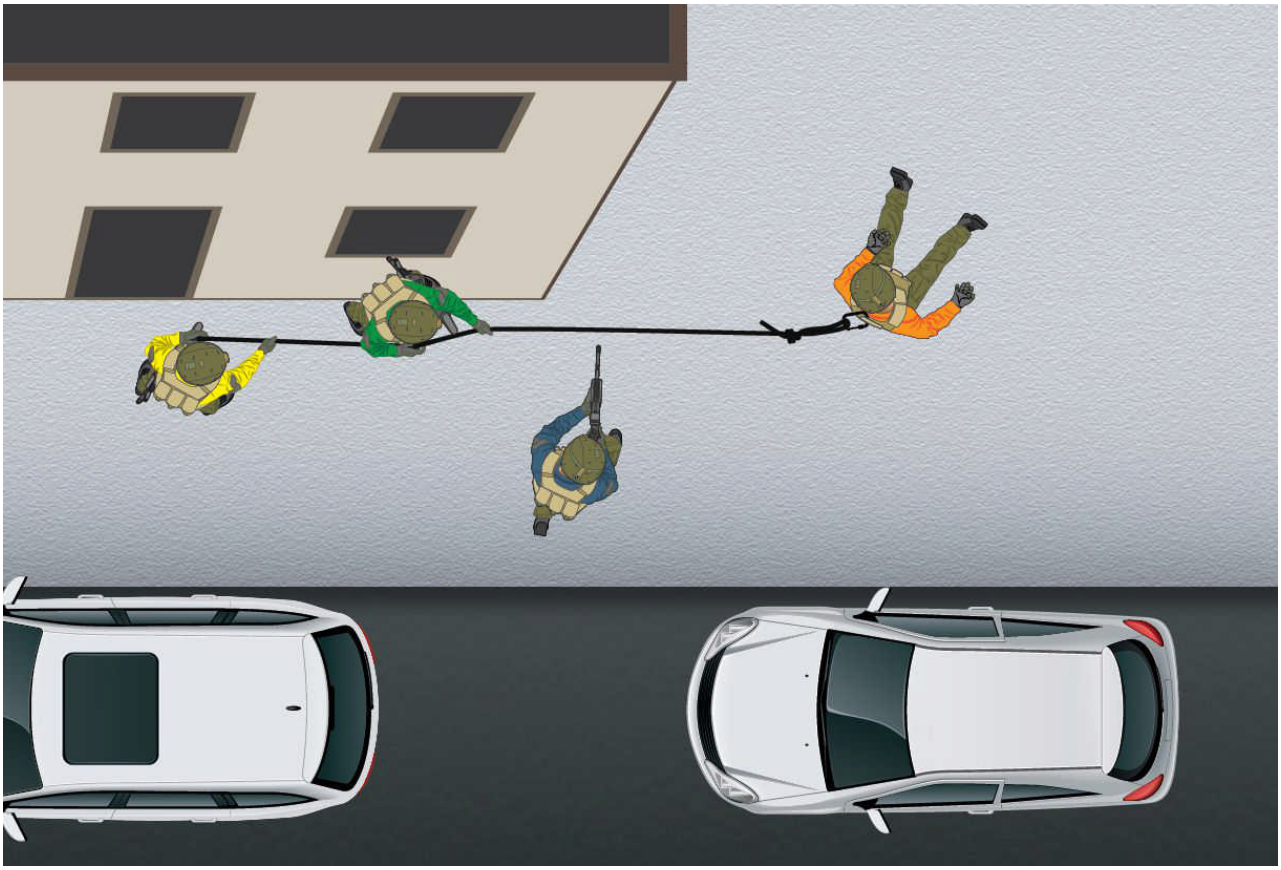
## STEP 1 – Employ Tubular Nylon Rescue Lanyard

In some situations, a team member might become wounded by a sniper and will be immobilized in an exposed position. Experienced snipers have been known to deliberately wound a single member of an enemy unit in the open in order to draw other targets out from behind cover. If the team finds itself in this situation it can greatly increase the chances of survival by using a tubular nylon rescue lanyard. In urban combat, each team member should carry a strand of tubular nylon approximately 15-feet long. If a longer strand is needed, two strands can be tied together with a water knot. A heavy carabiner should be attached to the end of the lanyard. If the casualty is conscious, the team can toss him/her the lanyard which can then be clipped to the vest or belt. If the casualty is unconscious, a single team member can sprint to the casualty, clip the lanyard and run back to cover. When executing this second option, the running team member should clip the lanyard to himself/herself while running to the casualty. This will still cause exposure but it will be a shorter time than if the team had to drag the casualty to safety. While one team member deploys the lanyard, the rest of the team should provide cover.

# SNIPER CASUALTY RESCUE

## STEP 2 – Drag the Casualty to Safety

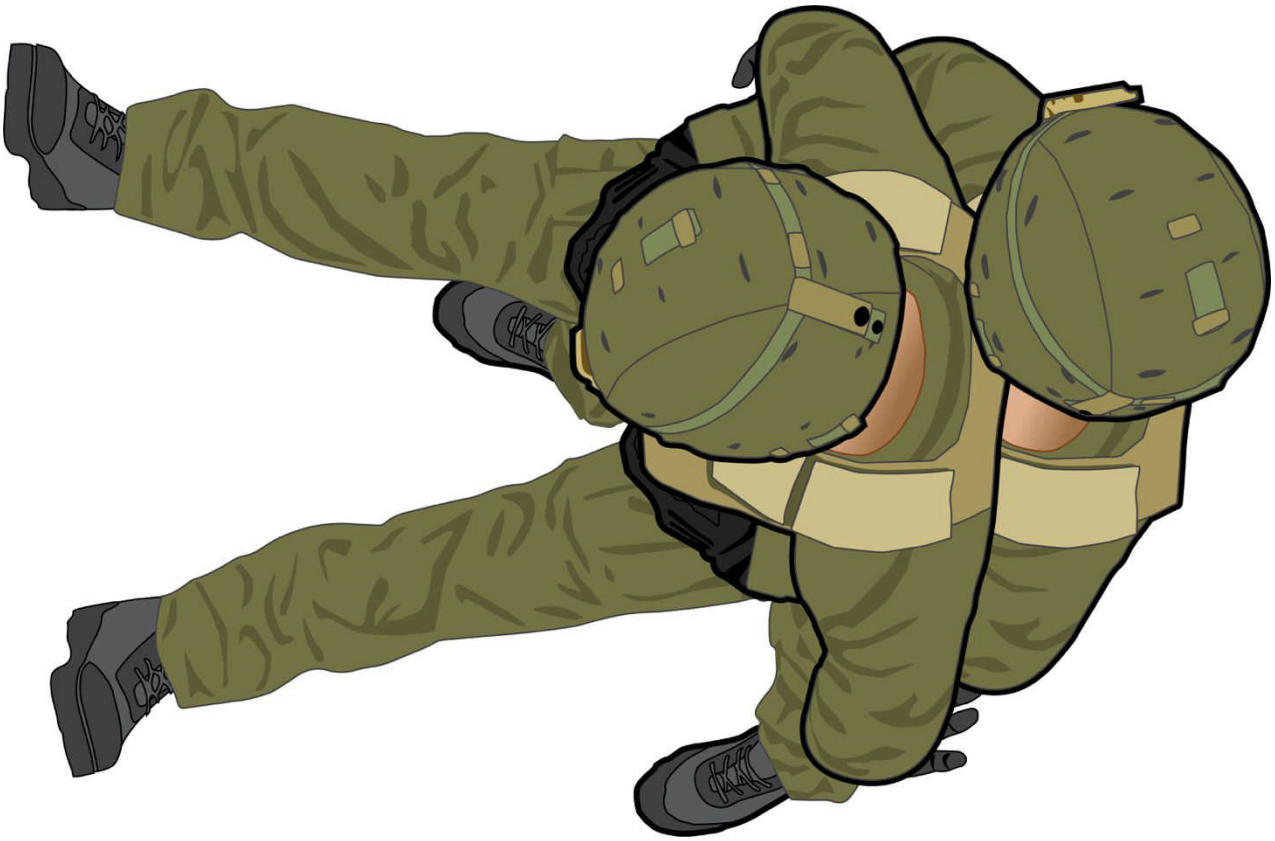
Once the casualty is clipped to the lanyard, the rest of the team can pull on the lanyard to drag the casualty back behind cover. At least one team member should provide security or lay down suppressive fire.



# CASUALTY CARRY TECHNIQUES

## One-Person Under Arm Drag

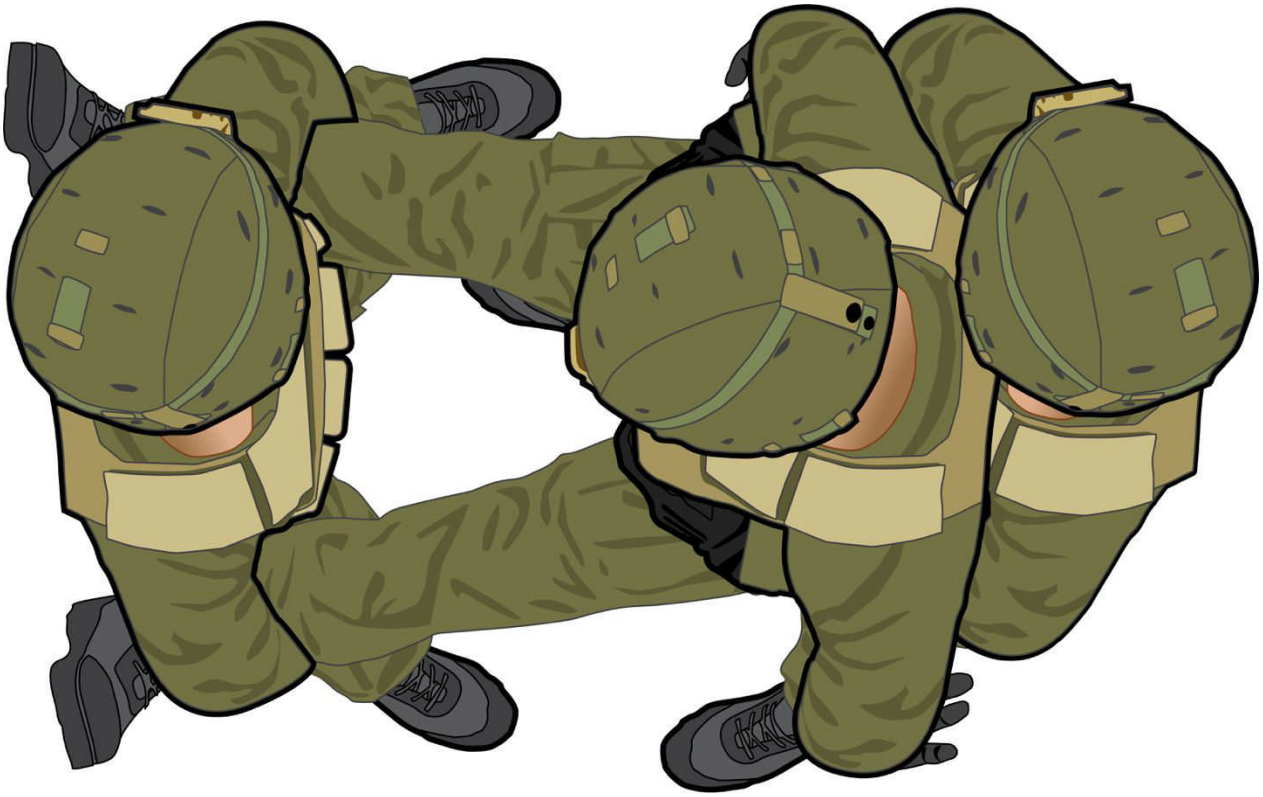
For this technique, the rescuing team member will approach the casualty from behind and reach under the casualty's arms, securing a firm grip. The rescuing team member will attempt to support the casualty's head and neck as much as possible by letting the head rest on the rescuing team member's chest. The team member will then move backwards, dragging the casualty to safety. This movement can be performed either from the standing position or kneeling position.



# CASUALTY CARRY TECHNIQUES

## Two-Person Carry

This technique is much faster and is the preferred technique if two team members are available. One team member will grab the casualty under the arms and the other team member will grab the casualty under the knees. The two team members will then quickly move the casualty to a safe location. It is possible for the team member holding the legs to face forward so both carriers are facing the same direction. This can improve movement speed and make it easier to avoid tripping. However, since the team member holding the legs has the lighter load, if the evacuation team comes under fire there is a danger that the lead team member will speed up and pull the casualty away from the trail team member. When the two team members are facing each other it is also easier for them to communicate and move in any direction. There are advantages and disadvantages for each technique and it is up to the team to decide which one to use.



# FURTHER TRAINING
# Courses and Resources

This manual provides an overview of high-intensity urban combat tactics. However, the manual leaves many areas unexplored. There are a variety of other Special Tactics manuals, both current and in production, that are designed to complement this manual. As mentioned in the introduction, this manual is an abridged version of the full length *Squad-Level Military Urban Combat* book which is available in print form only from our website and goes into greater detail on low-intensity urban combat and close quarters battle tactics appropriate for hostage rescue and direct action targeting missions.

Other infantry manuals are also designed to compliment this book, including *Squad-Level Infantry Rural Combat*, *Small Unit Infantry Ambush Tactics* and *Small Unit Machine Gun Employment*. Additional infantry and combined arms titles are currently in development. For more information on these additional manuals, visit **www.specialtactics.me.**

Every Special Tactics book has a companion online course. If you cannot find the online course associated with your book that means it is still in production and has not yet been released. Visit our website to explore our growing selection of online courses. Online courses compliment the material covered in the books and present knowledge and information in a variety of multimedia formats including interactive presentations, animations, videos, and podcasts. All online courses also include interactive quizzes, tests, and a serial-numbered completion certificate.

Finally, Special Tactics also offers in-person training. For information about upcoming courses or to request a custom course at your location please contact us on our website. If you have any other questions, comments or suggestions regarding this book, the Special Tactics staff welcomes you to contact us on our website at **www.specialtactics.me**. We look forward to hearing from you and hope you found this book worthwhile. Thank you for keeping our country and communities safe.